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# ON HILL AND PLAIN

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LORD AND LADY HARDINGE ON "MAGGIE"

*[Frontispiece]*

# ON HILL AND PLAIN

By  
LORD HARDINGE  
OF PENSHURST, K.G.

LONDON

*First Edition . . . 1933*

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## PREFACE

THE accompanying reminiscences of sport in India are recorded only as memories of happy days spent with generous hosts in that wonderful country, and as of possible interest to some of my English and Indian friends.

They should be regarded simply as sporting records of an inexperienced sportsman.

H.



## INTRODUCTION

IT may be well to explain that the sporting incidents recorded in the following chapters are not the ordinary, everyday events in the life of a Viceroy of India, but in my own case they were the form of relaxation that I loved best from the crushing burden of work that is the usual lot of a Viceroy.

Every year the Viceroy spends about four months travelling, during which the railway train becomes his headquarters. He is supposed, during the five years of his office, to visit every Province and all the most important States, and it is during the course of these visits that opportunities for sport are presented after the conclusion of official or ceremonial duties. It may have been that from my love of sport and from the consequent desire of the Princes and others to meet my wishes, I had greater opportunities for indulging my tastes in this respect than my predecessors, but I maintain that there is no better way of breaking down the official barriers

surrounding a Viceroy and obtaining knowledge of the countryside than to participate in sport with Princes and others, and thus to establish such friendly relationships with them as may prove of mutual benefit to each other in both official and private affairs. On more than one occasion I have settled thorny questions while spending a day after game in the open with a Ruling Prince, and it is in this way that I grew to know and appreciate the Princes and they got to know me. These days of sport are now over, but my modest home in Kent is full of trophies of the chase from India, and they are a perpetual source of pleasure to me, since each individual trophy recalls to me persons, incidents and surroundings which in the eventide of my life I might so easily forget.

H.

*June, 1933*

## THE CHEETAH

THE Cheetah is a curious and interesting animal, to be found in India only in central and southern districts. Unlike a panther, it can be tamed and kept in friendly captivity. It has a very close resemblance to a panther, except for its cat-like head, which is rather smaller, and its feet, which are like those of a dog. Its coat is almost exactly like that of a panther, but its movements are partly those of a dog and partly of a cat. It looks as though its origin as a species must have been a cross between a dog and a panther.

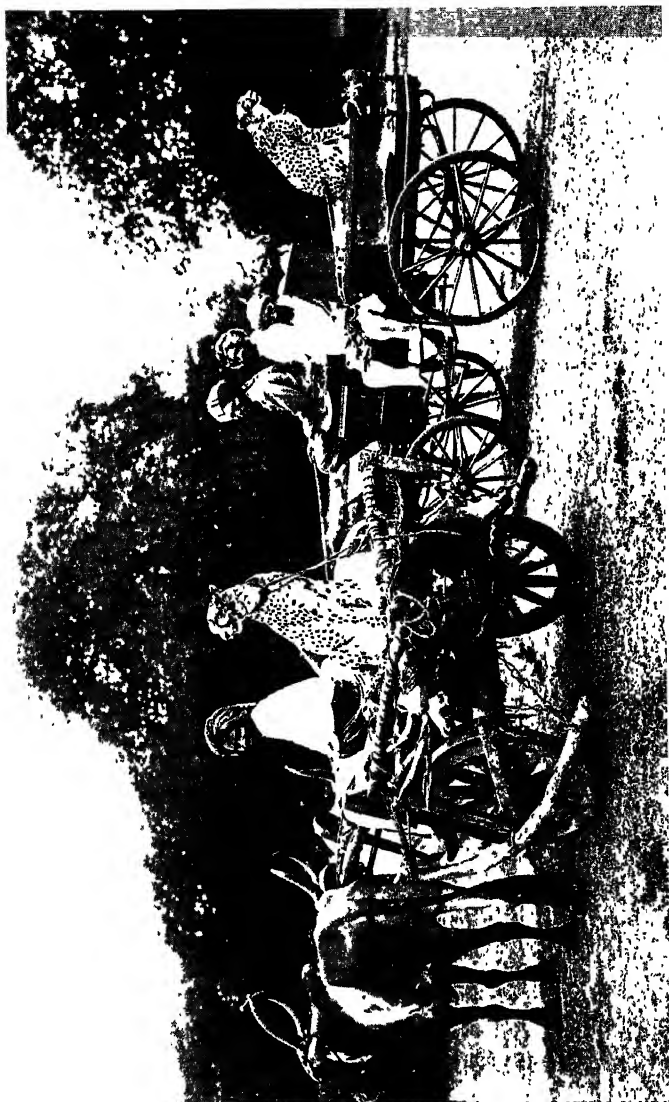
It was in September 1911, shortly after the death of the late Nizam, that I went from Simla to Hyderabad in the Deccan, to meet the young and present Nizam as soon as possible after his accession as Ruling Chief of the State of Hyderabad, the first and most important State in India with which the British Government in India has always been in alliance. This was the first of many visits that I paid to the Nizam in Hyder-

abad, which happily developed into a friendship which proved of mutual advantage both to His Highness and myself and to the interests which we respectively represented.

My stay, owing to the great heat, was limited, but as the Nizam was so kind as to invite me to a hunt of black buck by cheetahs, I very gladly assented, as at that time I had never seen a cheetah.

In the early morning a considerable party, including the Nizam and myself, rode out to a spot on rolling downs resembling those of Sussex or Dorsetshire and found there two bullock carts, on the tail of each of which a cheetah was seated with a hood over the eyes to prevent it seeing. The animals seemed perfectly docile.

Previous to our arrival, horsemen had been sent out to find herds of buck and to drive them towards the spot where we were. Presently we saw in the distance a herd on the horizon, evidently driven, and approaching obliquely towards us. The hood was at once taken off one of the cheetahs, which spotted the herd of buck immediately and, on being released from its chain, dashed off after them like an arrow from a bow, and we all galloped after the cheetah as fast as we could. It was evident at once that the



CHEETAHS AT HYDERABAD





cheetah had a far greater turn of speed than the buck, for although the buck had a long start they were soon overhauled by the cheetah, which suddenly sprung at the neck of one of the biggest buck and brought it down. When we came up to the cheetah and buck we found the cheetah simply holding down the buck by its teeth, firmly fixed in the buck's throat, and in that way strangling it. The buck was quickly despatched to put an end to its sufferings and the cheetah's grip of its neck forcibly released, and compensated for by part of the buck's entrails.

An even more interesting experiment was then made. The second cheetah was taken, after removal of its hood, and placed behind a big stone on the downs, and left there all alone. We stood waiting about a quarter of a mile away. Presently, when a herd of black buck appeared on the horizon, we saw the cheetah crouch and then crawl on its stomach towards the advancing buck, but as soon as the buck turned on catching sight of the cheetah, it dashed after them like a flash of lightning, and in a few minutes the same result happened as I have previously described.

I was told as a curious fact that a cheetah never

pulls down a hind, and nearly always selects as its victim the biggest buck in the herd.

After these two experiences we returned to the city. It was an interesting show, but I never wanted to see it again.

## BIKANER

OF all the Provinces and States of India the State of Bikaner is the most sporting. There is no big game in Bikaner, but the State provides the most varied list of smaller game such as black buck, chinkara, sand-grouse, duck, demoiselle crane, wild boar, smaller bustard and partridge.

On arrival in India in 1910 the Maharajas of Bikaner and Gwalior were two of the first to greet me at Calcutta, and these two were my first guests in Government House and honoured me by their visits many times later. They also extended to me on many occasions the most generous hospitality in their States and provided me with the most wonderful sport. I always regarded them and the Maharaja of Mysore as my greatest friends amongst the Indian Princes, and though, sad to relate, Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior is no more, I still cherish a very warm feeling of friendship for the Maharaja of Bikaner, a progressive ruler of his own State,

and a loyal supporter of the British Raj in India.

It was in November 1912 that I paid my first visit to Bikaner. I was met by the Maharaja and his principal Sirdars at Sujangarh, the frontier of Bikaner and Jaipur, at the close of my visit to the Maharaja of Jaipur, during the course of which I had paid a visit to the plague camp, the plague being rather bad at that time in Jaipur, owing to the refusal of the Maharaja, on religious grounds, to sanction the destruction of rats, and to other reasons.

My train halted at the frontier at 8 a.m. on the morning of 22nd November, and from my carriage I could see the Maharaja and his Sirdars assembled on the platform to receive me. But unfortunately I had been poisoned by something I had eaten at a banquet in Jaipur on the previous evening, and as I had a high temperature my doctor, Sir James Roberts, refused to allow me to get out of bed. It was decided that my train was to remain in a siding of the station, and no reception took place. When it was known that I was confined to my bed, the word went round that I had got the plague! The Maharaja sent me word that there was a very fine black buck that he wished me to shoot a



WITH H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER



few miles away, and I replied that I would do so the next day. My doctor ridiculed the idea, saying that I would be at least three days in bed, but I was right, and I shot the buck next day, though really hardly equal to the effort.

It was the first black buck I had ever shot, and I was greatly interested by the *modus operandi*. The country was desert, with patches of undergrowth here and there. I was driven out in a carriage for some miles to a spot where a watcher pointed out the buck in the open a long distance away. Now black buck are quite accustomed to see village carts drawn by oxen and are not afraid of them, provided that they keep a certain distance away. A village cart with oxen was there awaiting me, and I got in at the tail of the cart. The peasant leading the oxen went round the black buck in a large circle, which gradually grew smaller, and when the cart was about only two hundred yards away and the buck was looking in another direction, I slipped quietly off the back of the cart and laid flat on the ground with my rifle in front of me. The cart in the meantime went on quietly, the centre of attention from the buck, while I was able to take a steady shot and killed the buck, to the joy of the Maharaja. It was a fine buck, but during the course



of my visits to the Maharaja I killed several others with much finer heads, some measuring over twenty-seven inches.

This is a very useful way to shoot a buck that is known to have some special merit, such as an exceptionally good head, or something unusual about it, but it is much more sporting and interesting to endeavour to select and shoot the best buck in a herd, particularly when they are moving in line, as is usually the case. The black buck moves very fast with great springs in the air and, owing to the considerable variation in the height of its body from the ground, presents a fairly difficult shot.

The chinkara is a small gazelle with a very pretty head. They are not found in large herds and are fairly easy to stalk, as they like to frequent places with undergrowth. A good head is about twelve inches or more. The best I shot was thirteen inches. During my recent visit to Bikaner I shot two or three chinkara by pursuing them from a motor-car, but on the whole I do not think that a very sporting way of shooting them.

The sport for which the State of Bikaner is perhaps best known is its sand-grouse shooting. There are two kinds of sand-grouse : the imperial



NATIVE CART FOR STALKING BUCK



BUSTARD SHOOTING



sand-grouse, a very strong big bird; and the common sand-grouse, which is considerably smaller. At certain seasons of the year the sand-grouse come in great flocks in the morning to drink at certain pools. These pools are well known, and butts are erected near the pools. These birds are curiously regular in their flight and arrive exactly at a certain hour. I remember that the first time I shot sand-grouse I was urged by the Maharaja to be very careful to be in my butt at 7.30 a.m. exactly, and the first flight of grouse passed over me at that hour to the very minute. They fly very high and strongly, and can carry a good deal of shot.

After the first shot into a pack of grouse they zigzag worse than a snipe and make a most difficult shot for the second barrel. They continue arriving for about two hours, and they are followed by the common sand-grouse in smaller numbers for about another half-hour. All these sand-grouse having failed to obtain water at the pools fly away into the desert, possibly to other pools. Thus for about two and a half hours, when the sand-grouse are plentiful in numbers, shooting goes on very rapidly, and the bags are sometimes very large. The best morning I ever had was one thousand four hundred grouse to

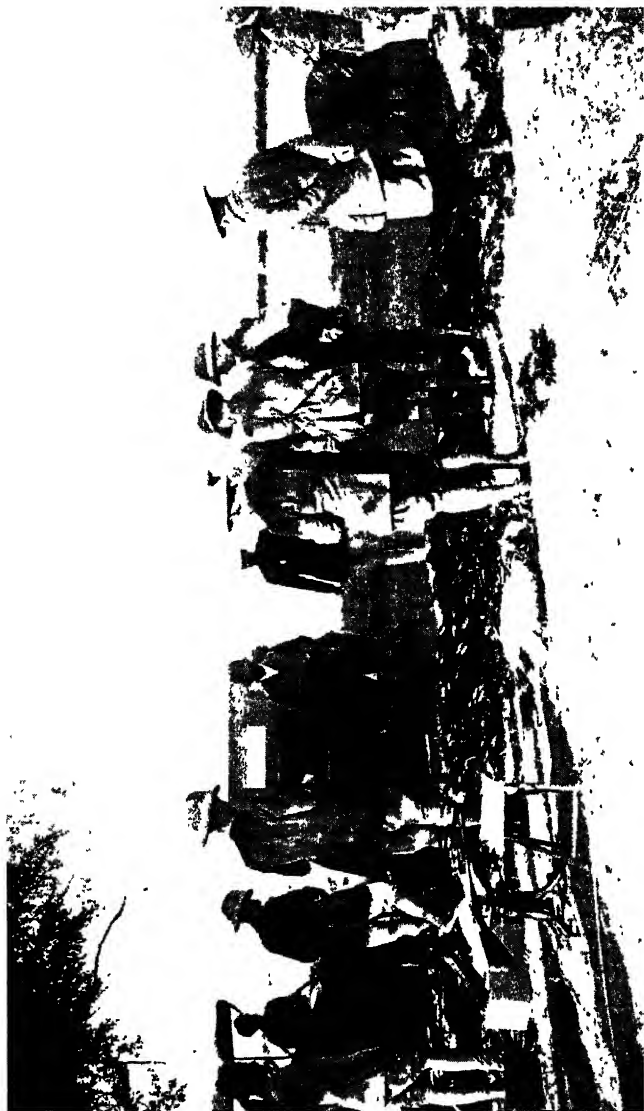
thirty guns, but I have heard that sometimes as many as four thousand have been shot in one morning. These grouse are very good to eat if properly cooked.

The Maharaja gave me also some excellent duck-shooting. At Tulwara Jeel we shot five hundred and fifty duck to eight guns in the afternoon, and at Gujner, close to the Palace, we shot six hundred duck in one afternoon to six guns, the two young Maharaj Kumars making the biggest contributions to the bag.

Demoiselle cranes (kunj) and smaller bustard (houbara) also provided sport, but these could hardly be compared to the duck and sand-grouse as affording the best form of sport.

Of course there could hardly be better ground for pig-sticking than in Bikaner, with its stretches of scrub and sandy desert, and the country is full of pig. I have referred to this in my chapter on pig-sticking.

I have never had a better time than those most enjoyable days of sport with the Maharaja, who is the very best of sportsmen and a marvellous shot, and the many hours we spent together in long expeditions were certainly very helpful to me in many ways, and I hope also of some advantage to His Highness.



DUCK-SHOOT AT BIKANER



During the five and a half years that I spent in India nothing ever ruffled our relations of mutual respect and affection, and I look back upon our friendship, which began twenty-three years ago, as one of the priceless incidents of my life.



## PIG-STICKING

IT was during a visit to Jaipur in November 1912 that I had my first experience of pig-sticking, and though for certain reasons I had very few opportunities of indulging in this splendid sport, such as I had were of quite a thrilling nature.

I arrived in Jaipur on an official visit to the Maharaja, one of those splendid old-fashioned Rulers whose loyalty and devotion to the Crown were unquestionable, and for whom the greatest respect was felt throughout the length and breadth of India. He was a profoundly religious Hindu, and the only trouble with him was that, owing to religious scruples, he would not allow the rats to be killed, so that plague became almost endemic in the lovely pink city of Jaipur. It was raging at the time of my visit and there was a plague camp a few miles outside the city which I visited privately, to the consternation of the Maharaja, but to the solace of the large number of suffering Indians in every stage of that horrible disease.

The Maharaja never married, as he was told by a soothsayer that he would die if he had a direct heir, but the Palace was full of his natural sons.

On the conclusion of my official duties, it was decided that I should make my first essay of pig-sticking on the 21st November. With this object in view I had brought with me my own horse, a well-trained pig-sticker that I had bought from Major Astor, a member of my Staff, but the Maharaja pressed me so hard to ride one of his own horses that I very reluctantly agreed to do so. He mounted me on what I thought was a quiet second-rate animal, which it proved to be.

The party, consisting of my Staff and myself and some of the Maharaja's people, went out of the town for some distance to a sandy plain with small nullahs and patches of jungle dotted about. Almost immediately after our arrival on the ground two moderate boars were found which were promptly speared by myself and one of my Staff respectively after very short and unexciting runs.

Half an hour later a fine boar was found, after which I went in hot pursuit. The boar was strong and fleet, and it was then that my troubles began with the Maharaja's mount. It

was with the utmost difficulty that I could keep up with the pig, and after pursuing it for more than one and a half miles I realised that it was making for a patch of jungle about half a mile away, and that if I could not spear the pig before it reached the jungle I must lose it altogether. I rammed my spurs into the horse's flanks and riding it for all that it was worth I succeeded at last in coming almost alongside the pig. Just as I got there the pig turned inwards towards me, jinked, and my spear went through its body like a pat of butter, but at the same time my horse tripped over the pig and went head over heels, breaking the spear in two. I then found myself sitting on the ground a few yards away from my horse, and realising that Mr. Piggy would, if alive, attack me upon the ground, I drew from my boot a long knife which I had placed there in view of any possible emergency. On looking round, however, I saw the pig lying stone dead with the broken spear protruding from its body. I was a bit shaken by my fall on the hard ground, and that was the end of my sport in Jaipur.

This experience made me realise how important it is in pig-sticking to have a very fast horse, so that on approaching the pig it is possible to

THE OLD PIG WITH A TORN EAR IS choose one's moment and accelerate, spearing the pig when passing. With the Maharaja's horse this was impossible, and I regretted not being on my own mount.

From Jaipur I went on to Bikaner on a visit to the Maharaja, one of my greatest friends in India. He was determined to give me better sport than I had had pig-sticking in Jaipur, and I must say that what I had in Bikaner was thrilling. It was on 1st December 1912, towards the end of a most pleasant visit to His Highness, that I was taken with my Staff and a numerous party to a point in the plain near Bikaner where a fine old pig with a torn ear had been marked down for me. Happily I was well mounted this time.

It was a glorious winter's day with a bright sun, and as we stood on rising ground, watching a battalion of Bikaner Imperial Service Infantry beating a thick jungle, one felt, with the anticipation of exceptional sport, that life was really worth living. Presently an enormous herd of pig, estimated at over four hundred, emerged from the jungle, and immediately a dozen or more young Rajput horsemen belonging to the Maharaja's Staff galloped off and dashed into the herd, scattering them in every direction, and

having spotted the old boar with the torn ear, gradually separated it from the rest of the herd. We followed slowly, and when it was clear that the old boar had become entirely detached from its associates, the Maharaja called out to me, "There is your pig!" I started at once to gallop after the pig, but when I had approached it to within about a hundred and fifty yards the pig suddenly stopped, turned round and charged me at full gallop. I reined in my horse, and holding low the point of my spear, it pierced its tongue. The pig gave an angry shriek and dashed off in another direction. I followed at once in hot pursuit and on nearing the pig after a short distance, I dashed past, and my spear passed right through its body. I was disgusted to find that although, in spite of the heavy weight of the pig, I was able to retain hold of my spear, it broke in two, leaving half in the body of the pig. The impetus of my horse carried me on two or three hundred yards and I could see the pig on the ground with half my spear projecting on each side of its body. Happily my orderly galloped up to me and gave me the spare spear that he was carrying. Then, to my great surprise, I saw the pig suddenly get up and again charge me at full gallop. As I was unprepared



"POOR PIGGY" AND LORD HARDINGE



I avoided the charge by quickly moving to one side, fearing that it might wound my horse, as often happens. The pig having missed me and my horse, turned and again charged, but this time I was prepared to receive the charge which was directed with such violence and speed that my spear entered the pig's chest and transfixed its body to such a depth that the pig, in its final struggle, was actually able to reach my boot and bite it. It was a fine pig of thirty inches, and most gallant. I felt profound sympathy for my brave victim.

There is no doubt that the Indian wild boar is one of the bravest and most gallant of animals. It is absolutely fearless and will not hesitate to attack a tiger, and the latter is always afraid of a pig, while a panther stands no chance against a wild boar.

After my thrilling experience, which I had thoroughly enjoyed, I asked the Maharaja, "Well, where is the next pig?" but he said at once, "No more pig-sticking to-day, as I have had quite enough anxiety over that pig!" and he would not give way. It was, however, very interesting to see from rising ground the members of my Staff hunting the pig in the distance. Altogether ten were killed.



I regret to say that this was my last experience of pig-sticking as, an account of my fight with this pig having been described in some newspaper in England, I received a message from a high quarter asking me to abstain in future from this form of sport. As a matter of fact my health during 1913 and the war in 1914 would have rendered difficult any more pig-sticking.

I always regret not having seen any pig-sticking as practised near Calcutta with the short spear. I have understood that it is far more difficult and more dangerous.

Although I recognise fully that I was merely a tyro in this noble sport, I have thought it worth while to record my few experiences.

## SPORT IN KASHMIR

IT was in the late summer of 1912 that I received an invitation from the late Maharaja of Kashmir, with whom I was always on terms of the greatest friendship, to pay him an official visit at Srinagar. This was accepted with enthusiasm and I looked forward to the prospect with the greatest possible pleasure. He always maintained that we had between us a political relationship of cousins since it was my grandfather that had placed his grandfather on the (ghadi) throne of Kashmir. It was conveyed to the Maharaja that it would add to the pleasure of my visit if I might be allowed to combine the ceremonial side of my visit with a period to be spent in camp in the hills with a view to shooting a Barasingh, the famous deer of Kashmir, a species of Wapiti stag, at least half as big again as the Scotch red deer. The Maharaja welcomed the idea, and promised that every facility for sport would be prepared for me.

As it is my intention to deal here with the

sporting side of my visit only, I will not enter upon a description of my arrival in a magnificent and medieval State barge and the various official functions which took place in Srinagar, the capital, and which lasted several days. During this period I enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. Fraser, the British Resident, and his charming family, where we were all very comfortably housed.

The Maharaja was a splendid old man. At the age of sixty he took up cricket and had a professional from England to teach him and his Court to play. He had frequent matches, but I was told that he always declined to go out until he had made at least ten runs, and consequently, until this had been achieved, catches were dropped, fielding was missed, and overthrows were made.

At one of the functions he had to present me with a tribute of some lakhs of rupees. These were placed in silk bags arranged in lines on the lawn of the Residency, and were guarded by two companies of Kashmir troops. It was the recognised custom that the Viceroy should accept the tribute by touching one of the bags and then remit the whole of it to the Maharaja.

When one of these bags was brought to me

by the Maharaja, I touched it as a sign of acceptance, and calling my Military Secretary I told him to collect all the bags and take them away. The consternation of the Maharaja was a real picture as, for the moment, he did not realise that my action was only a joke, but he soon reacted and then pressed them upon me, knowing full well that I would refuse acceptance.

Another amusing little incident with the Maharaja was that on motoring with him to visit a school outside the town we came to a magnificent group of Chenar trees, a kind of sycamore peculiar to Kashmir, and he insisted on our leaving the car and visiting the trees. I saw a seat under the biggest tree, and he asked me to sit down and rest there. I told him I did not want to rest and would like to go on, but he absolutely insisted on my sitting down for a few minutes. I did so, but before moving away I happened to walk round the tree and was much amused to see a long inscription carved into the back of the tree describing how the Maharaja and I had rested on that particular day under the tree which was the largest of the group. Such little incidents only prove the extraordinary simplicity of many nice Indians like the late Maharaja. Nevertheless, I would

like to emphasise here that the late Maharaja was a good ruler and, though an orthodox Hindu, his Mahomedan subjects were happy and contented. There was never any trouble in his State during his lifetime, and had he been still alive it is not likely that the recent troubles in Kashmir would have occurred.

Turning to sport, it was on 14th October that we drove in cars out to a big lake called Hokrar Jhil, a good many miles distant from Srinagar. We were twelve guns in all, including Raj Kumar Hari Singh, the present Ruler of Kashmir. The lake was about a mile across and surrounded by high bulrushes. At different points boats had been prepared, and we crawled under cover of the high reeds to our respective boats. The boats were then pushed through the reeds, care being taken to keep them concealed from the wild fowl on the lake. I shall never forget the sight that greeted my eyes when I obtained a full view of the lake. The expanse of water was crowded with duck and the centre was packed with about a thousand geese which, becoming suspicious, made such a noise as I have never heard before or since. When the hour fixed for the shooting to begin arrived a rifle was fired into the middle of the geese, and as they rose

the sky became black with geese and duck in every direction, and breaking up into flocks they flew round and round the lake, gradually getting higher every minute. A tremendous fusillade broke out on every side and, as pre-arranged, everybody shot at the geese, since it was known that once upon the wing they would go right away. If I remember rightly only between thirty and forty geese were shot. The duck, after being fired at, flew away and kept returning in batches, and we continued firing at them altogether for about four hours, when they collected in the middle of the lake well out of gunshot. As they flew round and backwards and forwards they presented very high and sporting shots, and it was not easy to shoot when sitting in a rather rickety old boat. It was a glorious day, with lovely scenery, the old fortress standing grimly out of the lake with a background of mountains, and we all thoroughly enjoyed our day's sport. The total bag of geese and duck was nine hundred and eighty-six, the three largest scores being one hundred and twenty-five, one hundred and sixteen and one hundred and four.

On the following day, the 15th October, the whole party moved out into camp several miles

away to Draphama, where the Maharaja had established a large and most comfortable camp for himself and all our party. On driving into camp I noticed a huge crowd of peasants encamped at a little distance and I inquired who they were. I was told that they were a thousand men whom the Maharaja had collected as beaters for a deer drive. I had the greatest difficulty in explaining to the Maharaja that I wanted to stalk the stags, and he could not understand how anybody could wish to climb the hills after stags when the stags could be driven to him. All I asked for was a Shikari and a hillman who knew the ground. These were of course granted, but the Maharaja remarked that he would keep the beaters handy, as he felt sure that I would need them. I think he thought me either crazy or foolish, or both.

Having despatched on the same evening a shikari and hill peasant to inspect the ground in advance, I started very early next morning by car for the Dachigam valley, taking only my English valet and Indian body-servant with me. We went through a glorious mountainous country, the hills being covered with heather, scrub, and with rocky summits, while here and there were large patches of forest jungle. We

followed for some miles a lovely trout stream until we reached a small wooden bungalow of three rooms, which the Maharaja had specially built for me on the edge of the trout stream. The servants, kitchen, etc., were accommodated in tents. Nothing could be more comfortable than my bungalow.

Immediately on arrival the shikari reported the presence of a fine stag on the hill about a mile away, and having procured some portable luncheon I started off, leaving my Indian servant and the hillman to watch and wait for any signal we might make from the hill. Having done a good deal of stalking in Scotland, I imagined that my shikari would at least understand the rudiments of how to approach a stag on the hill, but after we had located the stag and were beginning our advance I suddenly realised that we were stalking the stag down-wind, and almost before I could say or do anything the stag was off, to the astonishment of the shikari. I endeavoured to explain to him the importance of the direction of the wind when stalking, but he evidently did not understand my English, and I decided that I would utilise him solely to find the stags and to carry my rifle, and that I would do the rest myself.



This was a very disappointing beginning, but I impressed on him the necessity of finding another stag as soon as possible. He had the most extraordinary sight, for after climbing and going along the side of the hill for some distance he spotted a fine stag browsing close to a bit of forest jungle on the hill-side, which I could hardly pick up with my field-glasses.

The stag was a long way off, but we proceeded to approach it in the orthodox manner and, to my disappointment, just as we were getting to within range the stag browsed slowly into the jungle, evidently without having observed us.

It was then about noon and very hot and the shikari explained to me that the stag would now lie down in the jungle and not come out again till about four o'clock, when we would have a good chance to get it. I therefore sent him back to signal to the others to come up with the luncheon, and after a good lunch we made ourselves comfortable, watching all the time for the stag from a hidden recess in the rocks.

I was half asleep, at about two o'clock, when I heard a great noise in the valley below us, and to my astonishment I saw the Maharaja driving in a carriage with a large retinue on horseback, shouting to each other and making the valley

resound with their cries. At the same time we saw the stag slip out of the jungle and go right away over the top of the mountain.

As I ascertained later, the Maharaja had come out to see how I was getting on and whether I would not like the beaters to be sent up!

Here was my second disappointment of the day, and the question was what to do, since the whole valley had been disturbed and there would not be a stag anywhere in it. I asked the shikari and the hill peasant what one would find on the other slope of the mountain, and they said they did not know, as nobody had ever been there. As it was only two o'clock, I decided that we would climb to the top and have a look on the other side. It took us two hours to climb up, and from the crest we saw another steep range of hills with a deep intervening valley covered with short scrub. We descended a short distance and carefully scanned the opposite hill, and to our joy we saw two grass patches in the middle of the scrub and on each of them a big stag was feeding. The nearest was about half a mile away and the farthest about a mile and a half. There were no paths, and with the shikari I crawled through the prickly undergrowth quite unobserved by the stag until we were exactly

opposite to it, but with a deep gully of some hundred feet intervening. It was very difficult to estimate the distance, but the stag looked small as a mark. I put up the three hundred yards sight and fired. I saw the bullet raise the dust just under the stag's stomach; the stag gave a little bound, and with its head raised seemed to be looking round to see where the danger came from. I took rather a fuller sight and again fired, and this time I had the satisfaction of seeing the stag fall to its knees and start rolling down the hill into the ravine. It was evidently stone dead. I then signalled to the hill peasant to come up and told him to get down into the ravine as best he could, to cut off the stag's head and take it into camp, but before doing so he was to count the number of points of the horns and to wave his hand once for each point. To my astonishment he waved his hand fifteen times, and he proved correct.

It was already five o'clock in the afternoon but I was determined to have a try for the second stag, which I could see was still feeding undisturbed. I pressed on with the shikari until I was, as before, opposite the stag, with the same intervening deep ravine. It was precisely the same shot as with the first stag. I hit the stag

with my first shot and it moved off slowly. I missed with the second shot, but hit it again with the third just as it got into the jungle. It was impossible to cross the ravine, so that my only course was to go home and for my shikari to return next day to find the stag, which I was certain could not have gone far. To cut a long story short, he returned next day, found the stag dead only twenty yards inside the jungle and brought the head back to camp. It was a twelve pointer.

We had a very difficult and unpleasant walk back to the bungalow down the mountain side in the dark, and reached camp at nine o'clock very tired indeed. As we approached the bungalow I heard deer moving about amongst the stones in the trout stream, and I made up my mind to go for them in the early morning, especially as I noticed that the wind was favourable.

I rose at 4 a.m. and after some hot coffee went out with a Kashmiri boy of about sixteen who said he knew the paths near the trout stream. It was pitch dark, but the wind was still favourable. He led me by the hand for nearly a mile to a spot where I could hear the deer still moving about in the water and making strange little grunts. We sat down in a grassy path and

waited for dawn. It was very cold. Just before dawn I was startled to hear a stag roar, which sounded as though it was only a few yards away. This went on at intervals for some time, the roar booming across the valley, but without response. As the sun began to rise I realised that there was a thick mist, but through the haze I could see the outline of a big stag standing broadside to me on a high rock about a hundred and fifty yards away. It was a thrilling sight. Knowing how deceptive mist can be, I waited till the stag's coat looked brown and not grey, and fired. I knew I had hit the stag, but it made a great bound from the rock and before I could get a second shot it was already in the jungle. I then heard behind me a regular scrimmage in the water and realised that the remaining deer were bolting for the mountain. I ran as hard as I could for about two hundred yards down the grass path when I saw a big stag with three or four hinds cross the path a short distance in front of me, climbing the hillside very rapidly. I had only a three-quarter view of the stag from behind, but I fired and realised that I had hit the stag somewhere behind the ribs and possibly in its backside. The stag went on and disappeared from view. I remember sitting down

in the path, very much out of breath, and blaming myself for having wounded two stags, both of which had apparently got away, and I did not feel hopeful of ever seeing either again. After a few minutes' rest I thought I would go and see whether there was any sign to be found of the first stag. As I was retracing my steps I suddenly felt the boy touch my arm, and he pointed up the mountain side. I saw the big stag, at which I had fired last, standing in front of a wall of rock about two hundred yards away, looking very sick. This time I took a steady aim and rolled it over. Feeling very satisfied with this unexpected result, I resumed my search for traces of the first stag, and found that also, stone dead, about a hundred yards inside the jungle. Feeling thoroughly pleased with this unexpected turn of good luck I returned to the bungalow at 7 a.m. and gave orders for the stags to be brought in. I had thus secured four very fine stags within twenty-four hours of arriving at the bungalow, and when the news was conveyed to the Maharaja he was extremely pleased and admitted that I had probably done better by myself than with a thousand beaters.

I went out again on the following day in another direction and on lower ground. After

a long stalk I only succeeded in getting a running shot and wounding a big stag at about two hundred and fifty yards. From where I fired I was able to watch the stag with my glasses cross the valley and take shelter in a wood on a hill-side rather more than two miles away. As the stag was pretty certain to remain there I decided that this was a case for utilising the Maharaja's beaters in order to drive the stag out of the wood. I therefore sent the shikari to fetch a hundred men, explaining that I wanted the stag to be driven out at the top corner on the right-hand side of the wood, where there appeared to be a pass over the hill. As it was only 10.30 a.m. I gave him four hours to get the beaters and to get into position. In the meantime I walked quietly with the hill peasant towards the opposite hill. In going down to the valley, as I turned the corner of a shoulder of rock, I suddenly saw a large bear with two cubs standing on its hind legs and growling, about twenty yards away in the middle of the path. There was only one thing to do, and I shot it dead. It was a very large bear and measured nearly six feet from its nose to its tail. I left the cubs, which were old enough to look after themselves. On approaching the wood where the stag had taken refuge I

knew, from seeing a large number of vultures in the trees, that the stag was there and badly wounded. I climbed to the top of the hill, and was pleased to find that there was a pass, and the only pass, by which the stag could get over the crest. I placed myself in position, and from it was able to watch the arrival of the beaters and the dispositions taken for the drive. Everything worked out admirably, the stag dashed out from the corner and I shot it dead. Unfortunately it was too near the crest and its impetus carried it forward, and it fell down a precipice of more than a thousand feet. Happily the head was not injured. It had eleven points.

In the meantime the members of my Staff had accounted for five stags, while the ladies of the party had caught a hundred and forty-one trout, a very good performance.

On the following day, the 19th October, we broke camp and moved to Kru. On the way we had a partridge (chikor) drive on the hills and shot a hundred and fifteen partridges to ten guns.

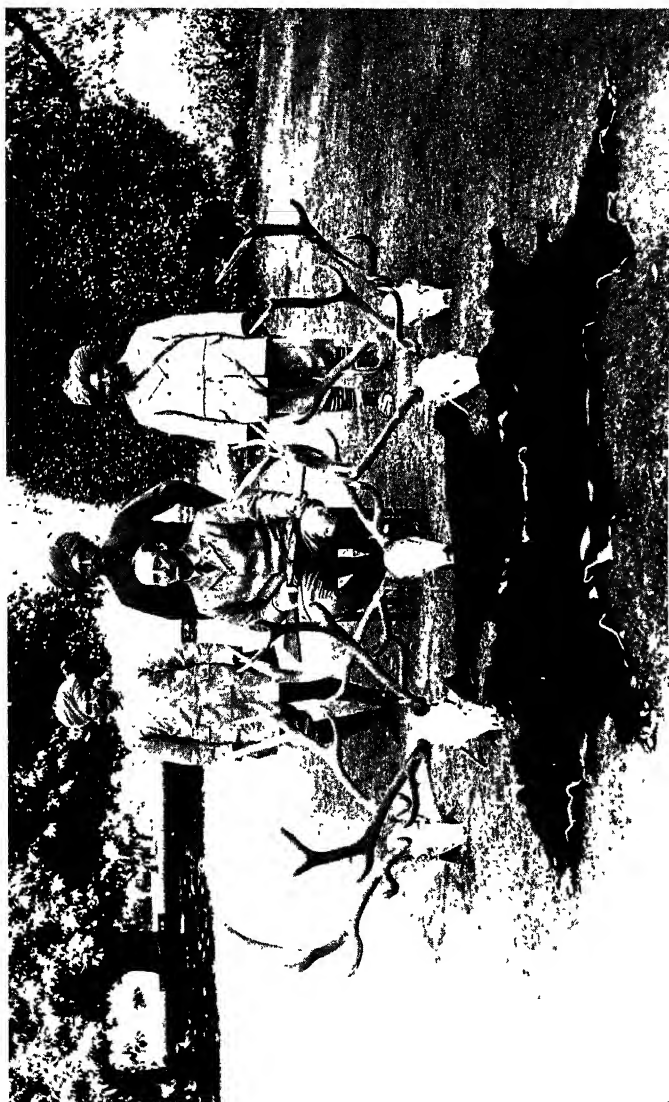
At Kru we thought it best to yield to the wishes of the Maharaja and we had two days' driving with his thousand beaters. It was a dangerous performance. There were twelve



rifles, all of different calibre, and nobody knew where anybody was posted. On the first day one stag and one bear were killed; and on the second, four bears and four small stags (which ought to have been spared) were killed.

On the other hand, we had another excellent day's partridge driving on the sides of the hills and shot two hundred and sixty-four partridges.

I had also one last day's stalking some distance away at a place called 'Tral. Here the hills were quite different to the Dachigam Valley. They were not so steep, and were covered with long and very slippery grass and stones. Arriving on the ground before daybreak, we heard a stag roaring and on locating it found it to be a big one. The wind was all wrong and a long *détour* had to be made, which was successful. Unfortunately, just as I was sitting down to take a shot, I moved a stone, the noise of which alarmed the stag. I could not see which way stag was going as there was a shoulder of rock between us, but I could hear it going down the hill on the stones. I quickly realised that my only chance was to toboggan downhill on the slippery grass to a plateau that I saw about a hundred and fifty feet below me. This I did, and on arrival at the plateau I found myself there with the stag



TROPHIES OF THE CHASE, KASHMIR



about seventy yards off, looking very surprised at seeing me. I hastily took a snap shot and hit it in the body, but it went off into a wood about half a mile away. I examined the spot where the stag had been when I fired, and found drops of blood which grew more copious and thicker as I followed up its tracks, and I concluded that the stag could not go far. My shikari was anxious to press on at once in pursuit, but I felt that the stag, if undisturbed, would soon lie down and die. So I waited patiently for about two hours and when I followed its tracks into the wood I found it lying dead about two hundred yards inside. It had eleven points.

On the 25th October, the whole party returned to Srinagar, and on the following day we had another excellent duck shoot on the same lake as previously. There seemed to be more duck than ever, but no geese. Our total bag was one thousand and fifty-four duck to twelve guns. The best bags were one hundred and forty-five, one hundred and thirty-seven, and ninety.

We left Srinagar on the 26th on our way back to Delhi after the most wonderful fortnight of sport that any of us had ever had, and we were all full of gratitude to the Maharaja for his marvellous hospitality and for all the kindness

that he had shown to us all without distinction every day and hour from the very moment of our arrival. I have the very happiest recollections of the Maharaja and of that visit to Kashmir.

## DUCK-SHOOTING IN BHURTPORE

IT was at the close of a long journey commencing in October 1912, during which I had visited several States, that I arrived at Bhurtpore on the 20th December, on the invitation of H.H. the Maharani Regent of the State of Bhurtpore, during the minority of her son the Maharaja. The object of the journey was to pay an official visit to the Maharani and State and to take part in the annual duck-shoot for which Bhurtpore was famous all over India. I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Holland at the Residency, where I received the warmest hospitality in surroundings of the utmost comfort.

Bhurtpore is a small State of Rajputana with a population of rather more than half a million and of small revenue, but it was admirably administered by the late Maharani during her son's minority. The Maharani was a charming lady, speaking English well, as is almost invariably the case with well-born Indian ladies. The Viceroy, being regarded as sexless owing

to his high position, is permitted in many cases, as in Bhurtpore, to interview Indian ladies without the usual purdah restrictions. There were none in the case of this Maharani, and on the three occasions that I visited Bhurtpore I was permitted to have long conversations with Her Highness, whom I found to be a very intelligent and capable woman. My official functions on this occasion were very few, but I inspected the Bhurtpore Imperial Service troops, a corps of transport which rendered good service with the Indian Expeditionary Force during the Great War.

On the morning of the 21st December I proceeded with my Staff to the lake (jhil) where I found a large company of sportsmen already assembled, fifty in all. It looked a formidable gathering with all the loaders, servants, etc.

The jhil was a shallow lake, probably about eight miles in length and about half a mile broad at the centre. Here at the centre there was a "bund" a few yards broad stretching out to the middle of the lake with high grass on each side. This, from long custom, was named "The Viceroy's bund." I was asked whether I would like to shoot from a position where the duck flew high, or whether I would prefer to obtain

a larger bag where the duck would be flying low and much easier to shoot. I naturally replied at once that I would like to stand somewhere where the duck would be numerous and would fly high. I was therefore placed at the extremity of the Viceroy's bund stretching out into the lake.

The system adopted for driving the duck was that at each end of the lake there was a line of elephants which slowly but steadily walked through the shallow expanse of water towards the central bund on which I was standing, and which was equidistant from the two ends of the jhil. As it took the two lines of elephants two hours to meet I concluded that the total length of the jhil was about eight miles from end to end.

I was taken to my stand, where I found everything arranged with great comfort, including drinks and cigarettes, etc. There was an Indian whose task it was to count the birds I shot, and in addition I saw some fine young Indians, almost naked, sitting in the long grass. I asked what their functions might be, and was told that they were troopers of the Imperial Service Troops and were my retrievers!

When I took my place duck were already flying



around in every direction, but it had been agreed that not a shot was to be fired until the signal was given by a bugle at ten o'clock exactly from the tents near by. When given, a fusillade started on every side which continued without cessation for two hours until noon, when a further signal was given by bugle to cease fire. At that time the elephants were close up to the central bund on each side. During those two hours the duck were flying on every side and in every direction and as time went on flew higher and higher, but the stream of duck never seemed to cease. They gave difficult but very sporting shots.

At noon there was an interval of two and a half hours for luncheon and rest.

As my tally showed that I had shot more than a hundred duck I was disappointed to find that my four retrievers had only brought about sixty to land. I mentioned this to a friend, and he told me that it was customary to offer a reward to the retrievers based on what they retrieved. I need hardly say that I followed this advice, which certainly, judging by results, appeared to be very sound, for on resumption of shooting in the afternoon I offered my retrievers one anna (about a penny farthing) for every duck that they

retrieved, and I really believe that afterwards I hardly lost a bird, and if they could not find one of mine I have a suspicion that they pinched one shot by one of my neighbours. I have never seen such keenness in retrievers, either male or canine.

After a very excellent luncheon and rest till 2.30 p.m. shooting was resumed till 5 p.m. The elephants marched in line up the jhil, but this time they had not, I imagine, gone to the extreme limits of the water, since there would not have been time for them to do so. As a consequence the duck were not as numerous in the afternoon. Still there were plenty and more than enough to shoot, and I personally was glad to finish before 5 p.m. owing to my shoulder being black and blue and my face swollen on one side!

At the close of the shooting all the game was laid out and the scores given of the respective sportsmen. The grand total was three thousand five hundred and eleven duck, amongst which I counted no less than thirteen distinct varieties, many of which were quite unknown to me.

The biggest scores were Mr. Cruickshank two hundred and fifty, the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur one hundred and fifty, Colonel Impey one

hundred and fifty-seven, Major Munn one hundred and fifty-one. There were thirteen centuries in all. My own score was one hundred and ten.

On the following day I left Bhurtpore and arrived at Delhi in the morning of the 23rd December for the State Entry into the new Capital.

I had two more duck-shoots at Bhurtpore on the 3rd December 1914 and the 13th November 1915.

On the 3rd December 1914 the duck were far more numerous than the previous year, and our total bag to forty-nine guns was four thousand one hundred and twelve ducks. The proceedings carried out were exactly similar to those of the preceding year. There were three scores of over two hundred, the highest being Mr. Rowan's two hundred and sixty, closely followed by Mr. Cruickshank's two hundred and fifty-six. There were in addition eleven centuries. My own score, thanks to my retrievers, was one hundred and eighty-three.

My last duck-shoot at Bhurtpore was on the 13th November 1915. Owing to the war it was carried out on a much smaller scale. There were only thirty guns, and the total was one thousand seven hundred and sixteen. The best scores were

Captain G. Herbert one hundred and fifty-five, and Mr. Gamble one hundred and five. There were no other centuries. My own score was seventy-nine.

When in India two years ago I inquired whether the duck-shooting at Bhurtpore was as good as ever, and I was told that owing to various reasons the water level of the jhil had become lower and that consequently the area of the lake had diminished, and that the duck came there in very reduced numbers. In fact, I gathered that the bags obtained there now are comparatively small.

## TIGERS

TIGER shooting in India is the sport of kings and of tin gods such as Viceroy. It is by far the most thrilling sport of which I have ever had experience, and though owing to the precautions taken danger to the sportsman is very slight, nevertheless the danger for the beaters, who usually only carry sticks, is very real, and is generally dependent on the skill of the sportsman with his rifle. Nothing is more dangerous than a wounded tiger when he breaks back through the line of beaters : even sometimes when he is not wounded. Of the many tigers I have seen killed, only two attacked the beaters, and in each case it was an unwounded tiger. In one case it broke back and seized a beater by his only covering, a loin cloth, by which he was carried for a distance of about twenty yards, when the loin cloth came off, leaving the beater in a state of nature and the tiger with the loin cloth in its mouth. What might have been tragedy was a real comedy.

The other case did not end so happily. A tiger which had evidently been fired at on a previous occasion refused to go forward and crouched amongst rocks. A soldier who was beating had climbed on to the lower branches of a tree and seeing the tiger threw a stone at it. The tiger rushed at the man and, jumping up, clawed the man's leg. Although the man was treated immediately by a medical officer on the spot, he died during the night, apparently from shock. A curious sidelight was thrown on this incident. On hearing next day of the unfortunate man's death, I asked the Maharaja of Gwalior, whose guest I was, whether the man was married, and whether I should not offer some monetary compensation to his wife if he had one. H.H. replied that it was unnecessary, as he had already done so. I was sufficiently inquisitive to ask what he had given to the widow, and he told me with the greatest frankness that it was one hundred rupees (about six pounds ten shillings) and that she was quite satisfied. This may seem incredible, but I can vouch for the fact that the late Maharaja Scindia was the most generous of men, and as I learnt from later experience the sum of a hundred rupees was regarded as a fortune by peasants, who had never seen so much

money. When the wounded Indian soldiers returned from the War I gave orders that each soldier was to receive a hundred rupees on being discharged from hospital, and I learnt that they were regarded as millionaires on returning to their villages.

Tiger shooting needs a great deal of skilful organisation. The first point is to discover where a tiger is lying or in which direction it is moving, and this can only be ascertained from peasants who may have either seen the tiger or its tracks, or the results of its depredations. Information is then given to the forest guards, who inform the Maharaja or their superior officer who may wish to organise a shoot. The next step is to secure some young buffaloes and to tether them at different points where the tiger would be likely to find them. A spot is generally chosen either on the edge of a bit of jungle or in some clearing in the jungle, preferably near a pool of water, where the bait is visible from some distance. Now it may be objected that it is very cruel to use a buffalo calf as a bait for a tiger, but on the other hand it is the fate of almost every buffalo to be killed in the end in some way or other, while it should not be forgotten that a tiger kills one or two fresh victims

every week amongst cows and buffaloes, donkeys and various kinds of deer in the jungle, so that the sacrifice of a young buffalo calf may be the means of saving many other animal lives through the death of the tiger. Further, the death is said to be almost instantaneous, and the young buffaloes to be phlegmatic and wanting in intelligence.

The tiger kills during the night or very early morning, and always drags the carcass of its victim forty or fifty yards away from the place where it was tethered and then makes a meal of it. After the tiger has become fully gorged with food it generally lies down and goes to sleep close to the remains of the kill so as to prevent the vultures, which always collect immediately, from sharing in the feast. They sit patiently in the branches of the overhanging trees and, being visible, are good indications to the sportsman of the presence of a tiger. The tiger generally sleeps till about noon, when it is likely to leave the kill in order to get a drink of water.

Early in the morning the forest officers visit the places where the buffaloes were tethered, and if one is missing they know that the tiger is there, and they remove the others before returning to camp to report the kill. The shikaris go out



immediately to arrange the drive and to fix "machans" in trees at some distance from the tiger so as not to disturb it by noise and, knowing the lie of the ground, they select trees in spots where they consider the tiger likely to pass when driven. It must be said that these shikaris seem to have a wonderful *flair* as to the probable intention of the tigers. These "machans" are generally squares of bamboo with seats of plaited reeds upon which the sportsman sits, and are placed in trees about twelve feet from the ground. A bamboo ladder is generally used to help the sportsman to climb up into them. In other places which tigers are known to haunt more permanent structures are erected of wood or iron, and even stone towers are built. In such cases these are a great convenience as much time is saved thereby, and they are more spacious and comfortable for the sportsman. Where there is high ground the sportsman often sits on the ground.

It is curious to note that, of the many thousands of Englishmen who have lived and spent most of their lives in India, there are comparatively very few that have even seen a tiger, and yet there are many parts of India, such as the United Provinces, Bengal and Central India, where tigers

are plentiful, while in Hyderabad (Deccan) an official is employed simply to destroy tigers as they are so numerous.

It is very difficult to describe in adequate terms the surroundings of a tiger-shoot since they vary enormously in the beauty of the forest trees and the immense variety of birds and animals which, driven forward by the beaters, pass by the rifles. The best season for tiger-shooting is the months of April and May, when the weather is hot as most of the pools are then dry and the tigers are less likely to stray from their kills. It is also the loveliest season of the year in the jungles, when many trees like the "Flame of the Forest" and the mouhwa trees are gorgeous with brilliant flowers and the jungle is redolent with the scent of jessamine blossom. These conditions vary, however, in different provinces, the country in Central India being often dry and stony, with scrub thorn undergrowth.

There are many Maharajas who have shot large numbers of tigers, like the late Maharaja of Gwalior, who had shot some hundreds, also the present Maharaja of Bikaner, who has shot more than one hundred; but I believe that that veteran sportsman and soldier, Sir Bindon Blood, who is now in his ninety-first year, has shot more

tigers than any living Englishman, having accounted for fifty-two in thirty years in India. During the six years that I spent in India I was present, with members of my Staff, at the death of seventy-one tigers, of which I myself shot forty-six. Still, I do not compare these figures with those of Sir Bindon Blood, who, I am sure, had generally to make a serious personal effort in hunting his tigers, while in my case everything that was possible was done to make things light and easy for me.

Of the many incidents connected with tiger-shoots I propose to describe only a few of those which are deeply impressed on my memory.

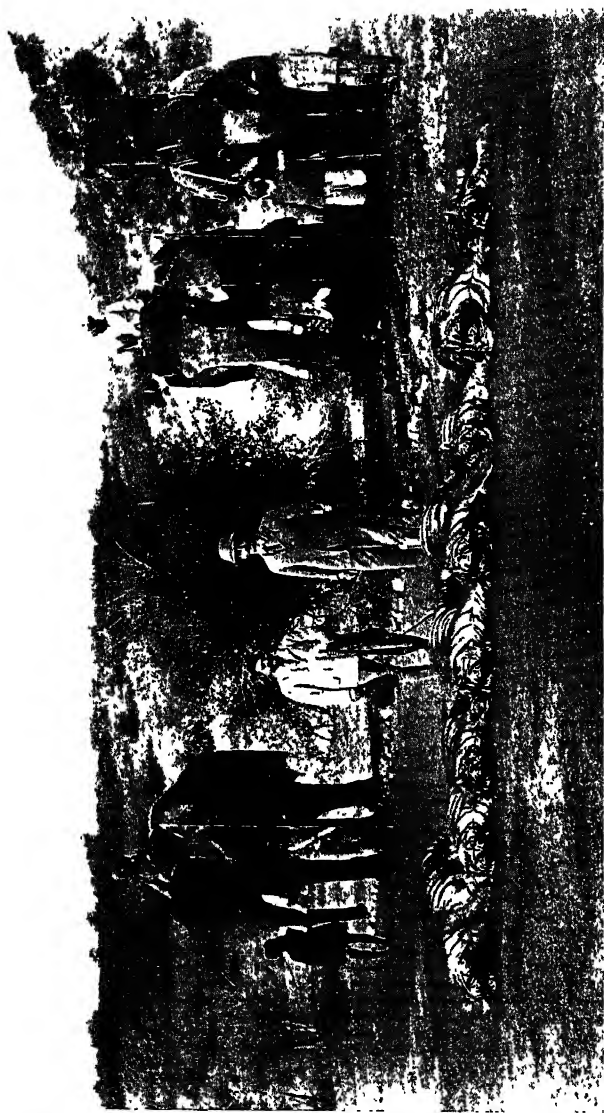
During a visit to the Maharaja of Gwalior in March 1914 he told me at dinner one evening that he was going to take me to a place on the following day where there were no less than five tigers, and that this spot had not been disturbed for several years. I laughed and told him that he was bluffing. Next morning the Maharaja and I, with several members of my Staff, started at an early hour, and drove for about fifty miles in motor-cars till we came to a spot where there was a large concourse of shikaris and beaters. Here we mounted elephants, and rode for about a couple of miles

over stony, undulating ground with patches of scrub, until some of us were told to dismount and to crawl under cover of a hill to posts that had been allotted to us, the remainder going on their elephants to positions commanding different points of vantage. After crawling over the brow of a low hill I found my position in a small tower situated half-way down a slope, the ground in front of me being shaped like a huge bowl, and quite bare, with the exception of a thick and very green patch of jungle evidently containing springs, and forming nearly one half of the sides of the bowl. Having crawled up quite noiselessly to the tower, I saw when I raised my head no less than three tigers, two of them being only about a hundred and fifty yards away, and the third lying in the sun on the opposite bank about two hundred and fifty yards away. The two nearest tigers saw me and went back into the jungle before I could fire, but the third, which was sunning itself, did not see me and I promptly shot it. This was before the beat had begun.

As soon as the beat began it was really a very interesting and amusing sight, as within a quarter of an hour no less than seven tigers broke out from the patch of jungle in every direction, trying to break through the ring of rifles. I shot two

more as they dashed past me, and I was greatly interested in watching members of my Staff shoot five more in the open on every side. In fact, we secured eight tigers in about twenty minutes, and the beaters told us that two more broke back in the jungle, so that there were in reality no less than ten tigers in this small patch which could not have been more than half a mile in depth. The Maharaja was proved to have been more than right, and was greatly elated at such marvellous and unprecedented sport. We remounted our elephants and returned to where the motor-cars had been left, and where we found an excellent lunch had been prepared, to which full justice was done.

After luncheon the eight dead tigers were brought in on pad elephants, laid out and measured. Five of them were very big tigers, the remaining three being younger tigers. After the completion of these ceremonies I suggested to the Maharaja that it might be as well to be thinking of returning to Gwalior, but he said it was impossible to do so then as he had ordered a photographer to come out from Gwalior by means of soldiers signalling from the hills with heliostats, and that it was absolutely necessary to await his arrival, since, unless the scene with the



WITH H.H. THE MAHARAJA SCINDIA OF GWALIOR



eight dead tigers was photographed, nobody would believe that the fact was true! Consequently we waited some hours for his arrival, and after the photographs had been taken we returned home. This I believe to have been one of the most successful tiger-shoots in one day in India within the memory of any living man.

Another interesting experience of tiger-shooting was the death of one of the biggest tigers that has been shot in India for many years. In fact, there is no record in existence, as far as I know, of a bigger tiger having been killed.

On the 11th April, 1914, the Maharaja of Gwalior, with whom I was staying at his summer residence at Sipri, came into my room at seven in the morning and told me that a large tiger had been marked down at a place about ten miles away named Kunwat Baba. I needed no encouragement from him to jump out of bed, dress hastily and have a hurried breakfast before starting off with the Maharaja and Staff in motor-cars. In the meantime he had sent off a regiment of his Imperial Service Cavalry to surround the jungle where the tiger was said to have been. I may mention that this tiger was well known to the peasants of the place, who, for some years,



had been giving lurid descriptions of its immense size. The jungle happened to be within about three hundred yards of the high road, so that about 9.30 a.m. we were actually on the ground. There was a stone tower near by into which I climbed with the Maharaja, the other rifles being posted at various spots near by. The cavalry troopers were dismounted and served as beaters. Here again the jungle was quite small, very green and very thick, except just opposite to where I was placed, and through the undergrowth I could catch glimpses of a pool of water sparkling in the rays of the sun, and with oleanders in brilliant flower on its banks. The surrounding country was stony desert with scrub thorn.

At a given signal the troopers began the beat and although, owing to the absence of a kill, there were no vultures in the trees to betray the presence of the tiger, still from the very moment the tiger began to move its presence was revealed by the cawing of a crow which followed the tiger in its movements, flying from tree to tree. To this was added the chattering of monkeys, jumping from bough to bough and making shrill cries in their terror of the tiger. As the tiger approached I caught a glimpse of it in the jungle

and remarked to the Maharaja that it must be a very big tiger as it had such a long tail. As the tiger emerged it came slowly straight towards the tower but, seeing me, turned and exposed its flank. I fired, and the tiger simply sank down in its tracks. As I always liked to make certain that a tiger was really dead I was about to fire my second barrel when the Maharaja stopped me, saying that it was unnecessary as the tiger was quite dead. Believing this to be so we came down from the tower, the other sportsmen came in and putting our rifles on one side we all sat in the shade of the tower. The Maharaja, who was very keen on taking photographs with his Kodak camera, went to within twenty yards of the tiger and, simply as a joke, said "Woof! Woof!" when to his astonishment and ours the tiger got up and trotted slowly into the jungle. It was very amusing to see the pace with which the Maharaja ran back to us while we all made a dash for our rifles, but we were unable to reach them before the tiger had disappeared. We were then in a great quandary as to what should be done, and were unable to say whether the tiger might not travel far before it collapsed. It was decided that the only course was to send for elephants from Sipri, but we realised that it would

take many hours for elephants to be made ready and to travel ten miles, so we made up our minds to exercise patience, and in the afternoon they duly arrived. When the elephants began to beat the jungle, they found the tiger stone dead within fifty yards of its edge.

The tiger was dragged outside and when we saw it we decided that it was very old and very thin on account of the state of its teeth, with a long body and long legs. The skin was also poor. After it had been measured I was told that it measured eleven feet five and a half inches. I said "Nonsense, it must be measured again," for an eleven-foot tiger is a very big tiger indeed and quite rare. This time the Maharaja and I witnessed the measuring together with seventeen others, members of the Maharaja's and my Staffs, and there was no doubt whatever that the total length of the tiger, taken along the curves with a steel tape from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail, was eleven feet five and a half inches. The tail was of the very unusual length of three feet six inches. The circumference of the forearm was one foot nine inches, and the diameter of the pad was six and a half inches. As it was felt that these very unusual measurements might create some doubt as to their



THE RECORD TIGER



THE RECORD TIGER

*11 ft. 5½ ins.*



accuracy, a statement was drawn up and signed by seventeen officers and others were witnesses that these measurements were correct. Two or three years later there was a controversy in the *Field* as to the correctness of these figures and as to the mode of measurement, but there could be no possible doubt as to the accuracy of the measurements in the manner in which they were taken.

The Maharaja was so pleased at this exceptionally large tiger having been killed in his State that he placed a tablet by the side of the road recording the fact. I saw it there two years ago.

The introduction and use of smoke bombs since the war have materially improved tiger-shooting, since they render the position of the beaters much safer, while for the sportsman they make the shot more difficult, since the tiger, instead of sneaking along in the cover, as it often did before, is now so frightened of the bombs that it moves rapidly, and generally at a gallop.

I have a vivid recollection of going after a tiger with the young Maharaja of Gwalior only two years ago at a place called Rampura. It was a lovely spot, consisting of a green jungle

with a large pool of water contained on one side by rocky cliffs. The pool was surrounded by green jungle, but across the pool there was a line of rocky stepping stones, which ended with a thin band of jungle on rising ground which ended abruptly. It was a scorching hot day, and we knew from the vultures in the trees that the tiger was there. While waiting for the line of beaters to start from half a mile away it was very interesting and pretty to watch a family of young otters besporting themselves in the water, and wildfowl quite unaware of our nearness to them. The beaters had to cover about half a mile of rocky ground and, as they advanced in line, they threw bombs which exploded on the rocks in front of them, and in less than two or three minutes we saw the tiger hurriedly crossing the stepping stones; as it emerged from the thin band of jungle where it had disappeared for a few seconds I fired, and it rolled down from the rising ground.

One of the finest shikaris that I have ever met was the late Maharaja of Rewa, for whom, and for whose memory, I have the greatest respect. He was a primitive man in a backward State, but one of the most loyal and upright men that I have ever met. On the outbreak of war in



WITH H.H. THE MAHARAJA JIVAJI OF GWALIOR. 1931





1914 he offered to go to the war himself, and at the same time placed all the resources of his State at the disposal of the Government of India, including men, horses, money and even his own personal jewels. It was a fine offer. And yet when I visited him in camp and inquired after his son and heir he told me that he lived in a palace several miles away, and when I asked the reason he remarked that we English did not understand Eastern ways, and that fathers always feared what sons might do to them! In any case, I insisted on seeing the heir, who struck me as a charming boy of about fourteen, and who is now the actual Maharaja.

To revert to the late Maharaja's skill as a shikari, he showed me the plan of a large jungle in which he said there were three tigers in different sections, and he guaranteed to bring all three tigers to a certain point where I was to be stationed within half an hour. To make a long story short, he succeeded completely and I shot the three tigers. He was very pleased with himself and me.

On another occasion he was not so pleased with me. He was conducting the beat of a jungle where there was a tiger and pushing it slowly to a point where I was posted. Here

let me describe the fascination of this jungle, full of wonderful flowering trees and redolent of pleasant scents. While sitting waiting for the tiger I noticed a few yards away from me a blue humming bird poised in the air, and when the beaters began to make a noise birds of paradise with long white tail feathers flew out, followed by doves and pigeons of every size and colour. These were followed by a flight of peacocks, while on the ground one saw wild boar, khakar deer, sambhur stags and porcupines. It was truly a wonderful sight. However, as the beaters approached, I was astonished to see a fine cheetah in an open space, with a smaller one, and as I had never before seen a cheetah in the wild I shot them both. Of course, the tiger broke away and all the Maharaja's efforts were spoilt. He was at first very much put out, but when I explained to him that I had never seen a wild cheetah before and consequently never had a chance of shooting one except in his State, he was mollified and, I think, in the end quite pleased.

A tiger will seldom attack a man unless it has been wounded, but when wounded it is very brave. A tiger that I had wounded when shooting from a machan in a tree was cunning enough

to sneak round and, from rising ground on my right, made a jump, clawing the tree, but I was well out of its reach.

On another occasion I wounded a tiger on the far side of a river and its hind legs were paralysed. Nevertheless, that tiger took advantage of some thin jungle to drag its hind legs down a steep bank into the river, and was swimming across the river with the intention of going for me, when a bullet in the head sent it to the bottom. It could never have climbed the bank on my side of the river.

There is one point to which I attach great importance in tiger-shooting, and that is to use a weapon of heavy calibre. It is the fashion now to use rather light weapons, but I found that a .465 rifle was the most practical, since the blow of the impact was so shattering that a wounded tiger could hardly get away. In places where the range of vision was limited to about seventy yards, as was often the case in my experience, I found a Paradox a most useful weapon, since that also inflicted a crashing blow and could be used as simply as a shot gun.

There is one other fact connected with tigers which is worth mentioning. The Indians have great faith in the value of tiger fat as a remedy for

many illnesses, such as rheumatism, and are always delighted to get the body of a tiger after it has been skinned. The headman of a village told me that they give dried tiger flesh in small quantities to children when they are ill, and if they get hold of tiger's whiskers they chop them up and give them to their children to make them brave!

Whether a little fuzzy-headed aboriginal had eaten tiger's whiskers or not I cannot say, but I saw one do the bravest, and at the same time the most foolhardy, action that I have ever witnessed. During the course of a beat for a tiger it was seen to enter a cave in the side of a hill. The little black aboriginal was standing by, wearing only a loin cloth and a string of beads round his neck, but with a naked sword in one hand and a lance in the other. He informed the shikaris that there was an exit from the cave about a hundred yards farther on the side of the hill. While a discussion was taking place as to what steps should be taken to make the tiger leave the cave we suddenly saw, to our consternation, the little aboriginal rush up to the entrance of the cave and disappear into it. We thought that that was the end of Mr. Fuzzyhead, but to our great surprise we saw him emerge from the other exit, declaring that no tiger was there!



MOUNTING AN ELEPHANT



I had him brought to me and questioned as to what he had done when he got inside the cave, which he said was only a narrow passage. He gesticulated with his sword and spear, showing how he had slashed blindly with his sword and poked in every direction with his spear without finding the tiger, and he insisted that no tiger was there. However, he was proved to be wrong when, a fire having been lit at one end of the passage, the tiger came out at the other. There must, evidently, have been a recess in which the tiger was hiding, but why it did not kill the aboriginal I cannot understand. It was a foolish act of great bravery which happily had no untoward result.



## THE LAMP-LIT PANTHER

IT was in December 1913 that, on the invitation of the Maharaja, I paid a visit of three days to Alwar, a small State not far distant from Delhi. After the completion of the usual ceremonial functions, some time was devoted to sport. One of the features of the city of Alwar which interested me and impressed itself on my memory was the view from the Palace of tigers in the park, apparently at large, but in reality on green islands surrounded by a very broad and deep ditch which it was impossible for them to cross.

There was some black buck shooting during two days, there being large numbers in the desert districts of the State, and I may mention incidentally that I shot then the second biggest buck that fell to my rifle during the whole of my stay in India.

But the *pièce de résistance* was the preparations made that I should shoot a panther at night by the light of a lamp suspended from the bough

of a tree. I had often heard of this, but had no idea of how it was done, and I confess to have been very curious and anxious to see it. I gathered from the Maharaja that when a panther had been located by its kill a kid would be tethered at a spot under a tree near by. If this kid was killed it would be replaced by another the following evening. When the panther was accustomed to the spot a lighted lamp would be hung from the tree, and although the panther would at first be shy of the light it would soon be tempted by the goat, and when reassured by the fact that nothing had happened it would return next evening. At the time of my arrival a panther had been located and had already killed a goat under the lamp, so that everything was ready.

The Maharaja drove me in his car for some distance from the capital, arriving at the indicated spot in the jungle just before dusk. We walked for a short distance very quietly, carrying our rifles, until we reached a strange-looking construction of immense faggots of bamboos in which there was a small opening, through which we passed, and closed carefully behind us. Inside there was a small space formed by a plank wall in front with loop-holes, and a broad

shelf to sit upon. We took up our positions on this shelf, and in the growing dusk I could see, through a loophole, a burning lamp hanging from the bough of a tree about fifty yards away, lighting a clearing in which a small kid was lying down. The sun was setting in a cloudless sky, and beyond the raucous cawing of a crow some distance away, a probable indication of the presence of the panther that it had detected, not a leaf stirred, not a sound was heard beyond the cry of a jackal, the barking of dogs in a distant village and the creaking wheels of a returning village cart.

As the twilight quickly faded, giving place to inky darkness, while illuminating by comparison the open space occupied by the tethered kid, a feeling of tension appeared to pervade the spot. The kid suddenly stood up and, whether needing its mother or nervous at its lonely position, began to bleat at intervals. A quarter of an hour passed, and just as we were beginning to wonder whether the panther had detected our presence and whether it would show itself or not, we heard a sudden rush, and saw a huge panther spring in the air from the jungle upon the kid, which it killed instantaneously with one blow of its paw. Having given the *coup de*

*grâce*, it just smelt the kid and retreated into the jungle. We remained in our concealment, watching breathlessly. In a few minutes we could hear, by the crackling of dry leaves, the panther walking stealthily behind our hiding-place, evidently circling round the open space and full of suspicion. It was, indeed, very eerie. Presently the panther came again into the open and, sitting on its haunches, began playing with the body of the kid, hitting it with its paws from one side to the other, just as a cat plays with a mouse. Some noise or some other cause disturbed the panther, and it retired again to the jungle and repeated its previous circuit of our hiding-place. After some few minutes the panther appeared to be reassured, and returned to the open space. It then laid down upon the ground and, holding the body of the kid between its paws, began to tear the flesh with its teeth.

The Maharaja then made a sign to me to fire and I shot the panther dead. It was a fine male panther in splendid condition, and seven feet eight inches in length.

Although I never felt any desire to repeat this performance, it was to me a very interesting experience, since it gave a clear insight into the tactics and habits of panthers in obtaining the

fresh food that is so necessary to them, while it was a further corroboration of their fearlessness in approaching lights, since it is well known that they will snatch small dogs from bungalows almost under the noses of their occupants. As for the little kid, although the shortness of its life may be regretted, nothing could be more humane than the instantaneous manner in which it was ended. One can only hope that it is always so.

There are, of course, other ways of shooting panthers, i.e., by waiting for them in concealment, or by simply having them driven up to the rifles. Although panthers are far more numerous than tigers in most districts, they are much more elusive and more difficult to get. They are, I think, more dangerous when wounded than tigers, since, in the first place, the same protective precautions are not usually taken by sportsmen, and when wounded they display the utmost courage in attacking their aggressor, with the additional advantage of being able to climb a tree after him, which they have been known to do. Also, they are not easy to drive, for they are very cunning in slipping back and in concealing themselves in the branches of a tree when pressed forward by beaters.

On one occasion in a drive for a tiger I knew from the tapping of stops placed in trees on the right flank that something was on the move, and I caught a glimpse of a panther in the jungle some distance on my right ; I was able to watch its approach with the greatest interest. There were two rifles on my right. It had already spotted the rifle furthest from me, and it crawled diagonally towards the nearer rifle, who was Major Fraser, A.D.C., when it suddenly saw him. It crouched for some minutes absolutely still. It then made a sudden dash towards some low rising ground and concealed itself behind it. Major Fraser saw it, but had not time to fire. The panther had its head towards me but did not see me, and it crawled on its belly in my direction, completely hidden from Major Fraser by the rising ground. When almost immediately under the tree in which I was sitting I saw the panther raise itself and look round towards Major Fraser, and I maintain that I saw the panther laugh. Its expression was exactly that of laughing. Anyhow, it did not laugh again.

On another occasion, in a deer drive organised in the forest of Dehra Dun, I was seated behind a big tuft of dry grass on the edge of the dry

bed of a river about two hundred yards wide, and my wife, who had come out to see the sport, was sitting behind a similar tuft of grass about ten yards away from me. I knew there were large herds of deer in the forest and, after the drive had begun, I heard the rifles cracking away on both sides of me, but nothing came my way. I was still hoping, when suddenly I saw a head appear on the opposite bank, and quickly afterwards a huge panther jumped down from the bank into the river bed and came straight towards me and my wife. When the panther was about seventy yards away I purposely moved, and it stopped and looked steadily at us. It was a most magnificent animal, and under any other conditions I could not have resisted having a shot. However, with my wife present I could not think of such a risk to her as would have been incurred had I wounded the animal, so I shouted at it and it ran away. It was an interesting incident, but rather alarming for my wife.

## BISON-SHOOTING IN MYSORE

IT was in November 1913 that, on the invitation of the Maharaja of Mysore, we went into camp at Karapur to witness the Keddah, to which His Highness had invited a considerable number of guests, and also to do some bison-shooting. Nothing could have been more comfortable and luxurious than the camp which the Maharaja had prepared for us.

Mysore is one of the few places in India where bison are to be found, and they are in considerable numbers in that State, scattered over wide and immense jungles and constantly on the move for great distances. The small black and primitive aboriginals living in villages dotted about the jungles are the only people in touch with life in the jungle, and are of great service to sportsmen as trackers. They have their own language, and are absolutely out of touch with civilisation.

The Maharaja, who was most kind, insisted on accompanying me to the jungle, though he



did not take any active part in the sport. Each day that we went out we started at 5.30 or 6 a.m. and drove in motor-cars long distances to spots where the aboriginal trackers had stated that bison were to be found. On arrival on the ground, the Maharaja and I mounted two elephants, and a shikari accustomed to the sport accompanied me on mine. The assistance of an expert was very necessary, as it is almost impossible for an ordinary sportsman to detect the difference between the head of a bull bison and that of a cow, and as a rule the head is all that one sees standing out from the undergrowth. As events proved, even an expert shikari is not always infallible.

Our mode of procedure was that two or three trackers went in front, followed by me on my elephant and the Maharaja on his, with a third elephant following, bringing luncheon, etc. After penetrating for some distance into very thick jungle, the trackers found tracks of a herd which they followed for some hours. It was very interesting to watch them, and to see how, whenever at a loss, they made a cast, like a huntsman with his hounds, and as they went they broke twigs of bushes in passing, so that they might know where they had been and

be able to find their way back again to their starting-point.

When a cast was being made the elephants stood still, and only moved forward when further tracks had been discovered. Eventually the trackers became very excited and pointed in a direction where they said the herd was to be found. Now it should be explained that wild elephants are very common in Mysore, and the bison take no notice of elephants whatever. Further, bison never look up, consequently they do not see the sportsmen on the elephants, and although they have a very keen sense of scent, the smell of an elephant presumably drowns that of the sportsman on its back. The trackers dropped behind, and the elephants moved slowly forward, while we who were riding them remained absolutely still and hardly moved an eyelid. We could see the herd very plainly in the undergrowth, and it was a most thrilling moment when my elephant, which was leading, walked very slowly right into the middle of the herd. There were bison all round us, and some within thirty or forty yards. I counted seventeen bison, but, alas! they were all cows.

It was clear that the bulls were away from

the herd. We tried very hard to find them, but without success.

In the afternoon, however, we came again upon the tracks of a small herd and we soon got near them, when suddenly the shikari pointed to the head of a bison about a hundred and fifty yards away just appearing above the low wood and whispered that it was a bull. I aimed where I thought its shoulder would be, and fired. It was clear that I had hit the bison, but it dashed off into the jungle. At the same moment another bison dashed off to the right, where I had a fair view, and as the shikari said it was a bull I fired my second barrel at it and had the satisfaction of seeing it collapse quite dead about fifty yards further on. Though disappointed that the object of my first shot had disappeared, I was much elated at the success of my second shot, but my feelings may be imagined when a closer view of the bison proved it to be a cow!

As regards the first bison, on examining the spot where it had been when I fired it was fairly evident from spots of blood on the leaves of the shrubs that I must have hit the bison rather far back. Similar marks were found on the underwood during the two following days that

we tracked it until it was found quite dead. It was a fine bull with a good head with a spread of fifty-seven inches.

When driving home in the evening with the Maharaja we passed an open space in the jungle where we saw two leopards playing together just like two cats. We were too tired to do anything but to let them alone.

These days were very exhausting as, although we started before sunrise, we seldom got back to camp before nightfall, and although a good luncheon was always provided for me, the Maharaja retired and ate nothing but a little fruit as, owing to his high caste, he could not, on religious grounds, eat with me. It only shows what powers of resistance he had, due chiefly to his abstinence and to the exercise that he took in playing racquets, tennis, etc.

On another occasion when I went out with the Maharaja after bison we had had a blank day, and were returning towards the spot where the motor-cars had been left. No precautions were being taken, and half a dozen aboriginal trackers walking in front of my elephant were chattering together and singing. I was tired, and half asleep on the elephant, its motion being conducive to sleep, when suddenly I saw what

seemed to me a very big bison about two hundred yards away standing under a tree. I stopped the elephant and pointed it out to the shikari, who said at once that it was a bull. The bison's body looked so huge and its legs so short that I felt some doubt as to where to aim, but I fired and the bison dropped on its knees and then recovered itself and dashed into the jungle, but as it moved I saw it well and fired my second barrel at it, and I really think I cannot have failed to hit it the second time as it looked as big as a house and impossible to miss. The trackers were at once turned on to it, but they were very tired after a long day and evidently anxious to get home, with the result that they looked for tracks in a very desultory manner and in ten minutes came back saying that it was no good. Two days afterwards somebody passing along the same track noticed a horrible smell and found the bison dead within two hundred yards of the spot where I had first fired at it. It was a splendid very black bison with a spread of sixty-two inches.

As we were motoring home that day another curious incident occurred. We were going along a straight road with some grass at the

side when a pack of wild dogs suddenly broke out from the jungle, and raced the car just as one has seen a dog race a car or a train in England. Is it that racing is a natural instinct in all dogs?

These were very pleasant pre-war days which I spent in Mysore with the Maharaja, a very charming and enlightened host. It was only too apparent how much he was loved by the people of his State, where the policy has always been progressive under his rule. The State is fortunate in having not only jungles, but very fine teak forests which are a source of revenue, while the vegetation of the jungles is both interesting and beautiful. If all Maharajas and States were like those of Mysore, the people of the Indian States would be very fortunate and happy.

## A KHEDDAH IN MYSORE

A KHEDDAH is the capture of wild elephants with the object of taming them for future use for ceremonial or domestic purposes. There must be Kheddahs in various districts of India where wild elephants abound, but I have never heard of any being carried out on so big a scale and with such great success as in the State of Mysore, where previous experience and unlimited man power at small cost make the Kheddahs more profitable than they might prove elsewhere.

In the preparations for a Kheddah much time is necessary, and the greater the extent of territory included in the drive the more numerous must be the beaters, the more careful must be the preparation of the necessary supplies, and the longer must be the time devoted to it, but at the same time the more successful are the results likely to be.

In Mysore the drive takes four or five weeks to complete and hundreds of beaters are employed.

It would be difficult to estimate the number of square miles covered by the drive. These Kheddahs in Mysore take place every five years, and as they are a very unique and interesting spectacle the Maharaja generally invites the Viceroy to be present, with possibly other Maharajas and many other English guests from Mysore and Bangalore.

We were invited by His Highness to a Kheddah in November 1913, and after a short stay in the city of Mysore for official and ceremonial purposes, we moved out with the Maharaja and the Guvaraj to the Karapur jungles, where a magnificent camp of more than a hundred tents had been prepared for the Maharaja's guests, with the greatest comfort and luxury. The camp was in a clearing of the forest amidst perfect natural surroundings, with gravelled paths and green lawns. That prepared for me and my party was the last word in comfort and good taste. The Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior was one of the guests, and as there were difficulties in the way of his having meals with the Maharaja of Mysore owing to the latter's very high caste, I invited him to come to my camp, which he gave me great pleasure in doing.

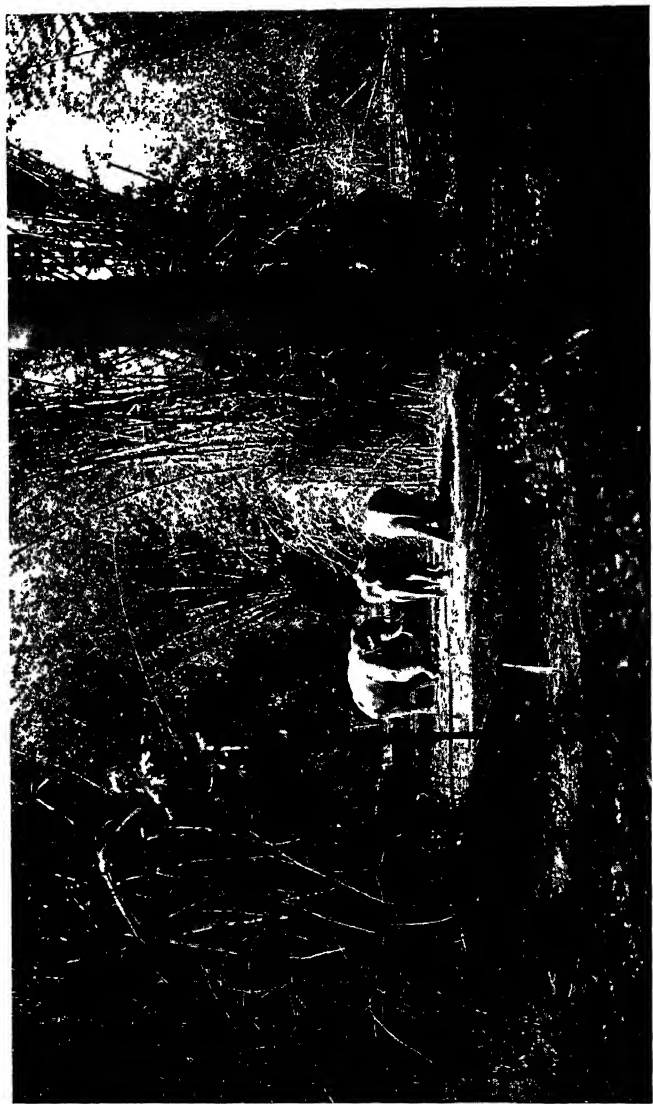
On the afternoon of our arrival I went with the Maharaja of Mysore to see the preparations



that had been made for the Kheddah, of which the following day was to be the climax.

About six or seven miles from the Karapur camp a stockade comprised of immense logs of wood bound together by stout ropes, and rising to a height of about twelve feet, had been constructed. To this stockade, which was of a circular character, there was an outer stockade of much larger circumference, which led down to the river Kabani, where an artificial opening from the river had been prepared leading from the river to that part of the jungle which had been fenced in and barricaded to contain the herd. The two stockades were connected by a narrow passage, and between them there was a gate which could be dropped from above so as to close to the herd the exit from the inner stockade. The river Kabani is a broad and rushing river with wooded banks and islets, but not more than a few feet deep in the vicinity of the stockades.

On the following morning we went with His Highness to a point on the river near the stockade where a platform hidden by the bamboo jungle had been erected, commanding a fine view of the river and its opposite bank. By the time that we had occupied this position of vantage



THE WILD ELEPHANTS IN THE JUNGLE



we could hear the shouts of the beaters, the firing of guns and the explosion of fireworks, and also the crashing of a herd of elephants through the undergrowth. This lasted for some time, as serious efforts had to be made to keep the herd together and to prevent it breaking up into twos and threes, and to compel it to cross the river at the spot opposite the artificial opening into the outer stockade which had been prepared. As far as we knew every effort on the part of the elephants to break out had been frustrated, and presently we saw a large herd of elephants emerge slowly from the jungle on the opposite river bank, and, led by a gigantic tusker, the rest of the herd followed into the river, where they seemed to enjoy themselves. At the same time the shouts of the beaters and the firing of guns from the bank increased in intensity, due to the excitement of the beaters in having, after an effort of some weeks' duration, succeeded in driving the herd to the exact predetermined spot. There were tame elephants called "Koomkies" ridden by mahouts placed lower down the river to prevent the herd moving down stream and to shepherd it into the disguised opening.

The sun was shining brightly on the glittering

swirl of the broad and swift river, with a background of green and feathery jungle, and it was a glorious and beautiful sight to see the herd of more than forty wild elephants follow slowly and majestically the big tusker across the river to the opening of the stockade, which they quietly entered. We all witnessed a very interesting and unusual incident when two cow elephants supported between them with their trunks a little baby elephant in crossing the river.

After a short interval to enable the Maharaja and his guests to reach the inner stockade, a line of beaters with "Koomkies" entered the outer stockade, and drove the herd through the narrow passage into the inner stockade, and as soon as the last wild elephant had entered the door was let down and escape became impossible. With so large a capture of elephants the space in the inner stockade was very cramped, and became even more so when nine or ten huge tame elephants were brought in to quell any resistance on the part of the wild elephants and to enable the mahouts to fasten strong cords round the captives.

The big tusker was first dealt with. It was inclined to show resistance but desisted after being charged by two "Koomkies." It was



THE BIG TUSKER LED AWAY CAPTIVE



pressed back by them against the stockade, and while mahouts passed two stout cords round its neck, others crawled under the stockade and fastened strong cords to each of its hind legs. Each of these four cords was attached to a tame elephant, so that the tusker was held in bondage by four "Koomkies." The rest of the herd was tackled in the same manner, though none of the other elephants needed more than two "Koomkies" to control them, while some were controlled by only one. These operations took some hours, but when completed the captive elephants were led by the "Koomkies" to which they were attached by ropes down to the river, where they were allowed to besport themselves in the water for about an hour. I must say it was rather a pitiful sight to see the magnificent tusker led away by force by four tame elephants, any one of which it could have killed.

After being watered, the captive elephants were led to a kraal situated some miles distant in a clearing in the jungle, and here they were securely tethered by stout ropes to trees, to undergo their period of taming and training, which was said to vary considerably according to the temper and character of the elephants. Special precautions were, however, taken to



ensure the security of the tusker, and in addition to being secured fore and aft to trees by stout ropes, a compound made of big timbers was erected around it.

A day or two later we paid a visit to the kraal with the Maharaja, which was very interesting. The big tusker had made a desperate effort to escape and had practically demolished the stockade that had been built around it. But for the stout ropes by which it was fastened to trees it would have regained its liberty. I wish it had, for I learnt later that in two months' time it died in captivity, probably of a broken heart. From indications its age was calculated to be about sixty-five, and I was told that it is very rare that so old an elephant survives captivity. I expressed so much sympathy for this monarch of the jungle when I saw it captured that the Maharaja sent me its tusks and forefeet after its death. It makes me almost sad to think of it.

On the other hand, many of the other captives seemed comparatively reconciled to their fate, while the baby elephants were delightful, and it was quite amusing to improvise a feeding bottle and to pour milk down their throats through a hollow bamboo. They thoroughly enjoyed this.



LASSOING THE TUSKER IN THE STOCKADE



THE BIG TUSKER DEMOLISHES ITS ENCLOSURE



I ascertained later that a few others of the captured elephants died in captivity, but that a considerable number became thoroughly domesticated and fetched large sums of money.

Two years ago the Maharaja told me that this was the most successful Keddah he had ever organised, and I am only afraid that my description of it has hardly been worthy of its success, but it was most interesting and enjoyable, and I have always been very grateful to His Highness for his invitation and hospitality on this, as on other occasions.

## SWAMP DEER

IT was in 1914 that, in response to an invitation from Sir James (now Lord) Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, we paid him and Lady Meston a visit at Lucknow, where they entertained us with the most generous hospitality and where we stayed for several days to our, and I hope mutual, enjoyment.

As I had never seen or shot a swamp deer, there called "gond," it was arranged that I should spend four days in camp in the Kheri jungles under the care of Mr. Clutterbuck, a forest officer of the United Provinces, a very able and pleasant official with a great reputation as a shikari. In agreement with Sir James Meston I had invited my friend the Maharaja of Bikaner, one of the keenest of sportsmen, who also had never seen or shot a swamp deer, to join the party. We all met in the Kheri jungle, where a very comfortable camp had been prepared for us.

The swamp deer, or gond, is a very fine stag with often a very good head. As to be gathered

from its name, it likes swampy ground, and particularly ground where there is very high grass which serves as cover. Since swamp deer were fairly numerous in the jungle, with a good sprinkling of hog-deer, there were also a fair number of panthers to be found which lived on them. The ground was more or less open, with a certain number of trees, rivulets and swamps being met at every turn and large patches, stretching some miles, of high grass. Elephants proceeding through this high grass were practically hidden except for the howdahs.

The first two days were not very successful. Three deer were shot by two members of my Staff, the Maharaja shot a panther, and a nilgai fell to my rifle. I had shot at a galloping deer about a hundred and fifty yards away and broke off one horn almost at its junction with the head. I picked up the horn afterwards and saw that the stag had not been injured at all by the shot.

We had much better luck during the last two days of our stay at Kheri, since we accounted for eleven swamp deer, two panthers and a nilgai.

When returning from the pursuit of a wounded swamp deer I heard a great deal of shouting

and saw in the distance a ring of elephants, the mahouts evidently in a state of great excitement. I hurried up on my elephant as quickly as possible and found that they had surrounded a panther which was trying to break out but was hemmed in by the elephants, which seemed to enjoy the sport of preventing the panther's escape. I pushed my elephant into the middle of the ring but it was very difficult to get a shot at the panther without running the risk of wounding an elephant in the feet, but eventually I succeeded.

As an instance of the difficulty of shooting swamp deer in the high grass, I could at one moment see two pairs of horns of stags in the high grass about a hundred yards away and nothing else. I could see that the stag with the better of the two heads was facing towards me and my elephant, but could not tell whether it was standing broadside or straight on end towards me. I decided finally to take my chance and aimed between two and three feet below the base of the horns. The stag fell dead, the bullet having entered the base of its neck, which proved that it was standing and looking straight at me. It was a very fine head with fifteen points, and being the last shot of the day I returned to Lucknow in a very satisfied frame of mind.

I have never had a chance of going to Kheri again but I can never recall those four days of excellent sport, without a warm sense of gratitude to Lord Meston and Mr. Clutterbuck, who organised so successfully the expedition.



## SPORT IN THE SIMLA HILLS

ON three occasions during my stay in India I went into camp in the month of September with three members of my Staff to shoot at Dhami in the Simla Hills on the invitation of the Raja of Bonthal. It was always a very pleasant outing at the end of the rains and lasted for three days. We never obtained large bags, as whatever game there was, it was always difficult to drive, and we averaged about one hundred head during the three days. The bags were, however, very mixed. They consisted chiefly of pheasants and partridges, but in addition we got some Khakar deer and Ghooral. We always had hopes of a panther, but in this our hopes were never realised. A Khakar deer is a very small deer which frequents the jungle, while a Ghooral is the Indian chamois. It is exactly like the Austrian chamois, but perhaps a little heavier in its body. They are to be found only on the precipitous and rocky hills, and are not easy to drive.

On one occasion, in September 1912, our party

was unusually successful and shot sixteen Ghooral in the three days. They present difficult shots with a rifle as they skip and jump from rock to rock and seem to understand how to avail themselves of any possible cover. On the two other occasions that we tried for them we hardly got any, one or two.

The Indian pheasant is an entirely different bird from the English pheasant, both in appearance and flight. It frequents the wooded slopes of the hills round Simla, which are extremely precipitous and cut with watercourses, being in fact the foothills of the Himalayas. It is consequently very hard work for the beaters. When flushed high up in the beat the pheasant, instead of going forward as might be expected, generally flies very fast straight down the hillside and presents a most difficult shot. When it gets up at the foot of the hill, which is rare, it is easy to shoot.

There are many panthers in the Simla Hills, but very difficult to shoot owing to the nature of the ground. I only once saw there a panther that had been killed, though I have often heard a panther at night in the grounds of Viceregal Lodge. They are the terror of the monkeys with which Simla is infested. These monkeys become sometimes a perfect nuisance, but cannot be

destroyed owing to the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus. A friend of mine got rid of them very cleverly from his house by placing some food on the roof in which some opium had been mixed. A few hours later a monkey was found on his roof in a state of stupor. He then sewed a piece of leopard skin round the monkey's body and set it free. The monkey tried to rejoin its comrades, but when they saw it in the leopard's skin they fled precipitately in a state of abject terror, the monkey in hot pursuit. I do not know the end of this episode.

There are also sloth bears at a little distance from Simla, but I never succeeded in getting one.

Those days at Dharni were always most enjoyable, and we were always grateful to the Raja for his generous hospitality.

## A DAY OF SPORT IN MYSORE

LOOK back upon the 11th December 1931 as about the best day's sport of my life, as I shot a tiger in the morning and landed a mahseer in the afternoon weighing sixty-two pounds.

I was the guest of the Maharaja of Mysore, with whom I stayed about a week, on a private visit. He was an old friend of mine with whom I had maintained relations of great friendship for nearly twenty years, and a man for whom I had and have the greatest possible respect as a really good man and a very wise ruler. His State is by far the best administered and most advanced State in India. This is partly due to the long British administration of the State in former years, but the greatest credit is due to the Maharaja, who has continued to govern his State on very progressive lines.

On the morning of 11th December we left the city of Mysore by car at 10 a.m. for a very comfortable shooting camp at Karapur and

stopped about six miles from the camp for a tiger-shoot. As tiger-shooting in Mysore is conducted on quite different lines to anywhere else in India, I will endeavour to describe the procedure.

The tiger, having killed a buffalo, had been marked down, and huge nets of rope on strong posts were quickly placed around a space of jungle which I should estimate to have been about the size of an ordinary polo ground. At night fires were lit round the outside of the enclosure and peasants stood by armed with long spears to fend off any attempt of the tiger to break out. From what was told me in this particular case the tiger had been already enclosed for two days and had grown restive, probably owing to lack of water, and had made several attempts during the previous night to break out of the enclosure by climbing up the netting, but had in each case been driven back by the peasants with their spears.

On our arrival at the enclosure I was taken quietly with the Maharaja and the Maharaja of Travancore, a nice youth of eighteen who was studying administration in Mysore, to a machan in a tree surrounded by thick jungle. The young Maharaja of Travancore, who had never been



WITH H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE



present at a tiger-shoot before, was trembling with excitement as he sat beside me in the machan, the other rifles being placed in machans behind us. The nets on that side of the enclosure were quickly lowered, the beaters at the other end, armed with spears, at a given signal began to make a great noise, shouting and beating drums, and above the din one could hear the angry growls and snarling of the tiger. It was evidently in a dangerous mood. The beaters very wisely hardly moved, while in our position we were able to realise by the growing loudness of the growls that the tiger was slowly approaching, but owing to the dense thickness of the jungle it was impossible to see more than a few yards into it. Finally, with a loud roar, the tiger dashed past immediately under our machan, and I only had time to lower my rifle and pull the trigger as it passed below. However, I hit it in the back, wounding it severely, and it was finished off by Colonel Muir, who was in a machan behind me. It was a fine tiger about nine feet long, with a very red skin in good condition. After the usual congratulations and posing to cameras, the whole party moved off back to the camp at Karapur for luncheon.

When it was suggested by the Maharaja that



I should try my luck fishing in the afternoon for mahseer I readily accepted, and although the fishermen said I ought to be on the river at three o'clock it was only at four-thirty that I reached the river-bank, owing to the day being very hot and my need of a rest after a tiring and exciting morning.

I was met there by an English sportsman who knew all that was to be known about fishing for mahseer, and two Indian fishermen, and I was provided with all the fishing tackle that was required.

Still my luck was with me as on my very first cast and to my great astonishment I hooked a fish which ran out at once more than a hundred yards of line. In its second run the fish jumped out of the water, and I saw at once what a very big fish I had hooked. I asked whether my tackle could be guaranteed to be sound, and being assured that it was so I made up my mind that it was necessary to kill the fish quickly or I would never be able to land it. After several runs of more than a hundred yards the fish got under a rock and sulked, but one of the Indians went out in a coracle and succeeded in moving the fish, which was already in an exhausted condition. I then slowly and gradually brought the fish in



THE SIXTY-TWO POUNDS MAHSEER



FIGHTING THE FISH



to land, when it was very skilfully gaffed by one of the Indian fishermen. It had taken twenty-five minutes to land, and I was in a thoroughly exhausted condition at the end. The river was about three hundred yards broad, with a very swift stream, which made the strain of holding the fish very heavy. It was very hot, my left arm felt like breaking, and the pressure of the butt of the rod was so great that they put a cushion between it and my thigh. However, I was well rewarded, for on the scales being brought the mahseer turned them at sixty-two pounds. It was four feet four inches in length, and its girth two feet five inches. It was the biggest fish I had ever caught. This was certainly my lucky day.

Of course, a sixty-two pound mahseer is a large fish, but there have been several instances in recent years of mahseer being caught in this river in Mysore up to a hundred pounds in weight.

Fired by my success, I continued fishing for two more hours, but I never got a rise. The bait was something very sticky like dough, which was cohesive enough to resist the force of the water. I did not much fancy being taken out in a small coracle by one of the fishermen to some rocks in the middle of this swirling river, from

which I fished, but without success. One would have had but little chance if the coracle had upset. The river was really beautiful, with great trees and thick undergrowth on both its banks, and the view looking both up and down stream from the rocks in the middle of the river, as the sun was getting low, was beyond description, and such as, being once seen, one can dream of but can never hope to see again.

## HUNTING IN INDIA

THERE is one sport in India that I must not omit to mention, though my experience of it is slender. When I went to India in 1910 there were packs of hounds at Peshawar and Ootacamund, both of which showed excellent sport, hunting foxes or jackals when the former could not be found. Hunting at Peshawar was often restricted owing to frontier tribal difficulties, but at Ootacamund I have always heard that it was carried on with the greatest success and best of sport, much of the country there being downland and well adapted for hunting.

When the Government of India established itself at Delhi as Capital of India in the winter of 1912-13 it was decided to start a pack of hounds, and in the autumn of 1913 drafts of hounds were brought out from England, and hunting was started with great success, the country round Delhi being well suited for hunting, provided a sharp lookout is kept for deep nullahs and ditches,

a plentiful supply of jackals being generally to be found in patches of sugar-cane.

The meets of the hounds usually took place at 6 a.m. in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and they were well attended. It was very cold at that hour of the morning before sunrise, while after the sun had risen it was too hot to continue hunting after about 8.30 a.m. It was great fun, and I have a happy recollection of several excellent runs after jackals, but somehow or other they generally escaped and we seldom had a kill.

When war broke out in 1914 the meets of the hounds grew scarcer and scarcer, till they ceased altogether, many of those who used to hunt finding sterner occupations overseas, while those who were left behind had neither leisure nor appetite for such distraction.

I do not know when the Delhi pack of hounds was reconstituted and hunting resumed, but when I was at Delhi two years ago I was overjoyed to find that the Delhi pack of hounds was once again in active being and hunting once more in full swing under the warm encouragement of the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, the keenest of sportsmen and a first-class rider to hounds. The fields were excellent and the sport good. Long may the Delhi hounds flourish!

## SPORT AT TEHRAN

IN the hope that some of my early reminiscences of sport in Persia, an adjacent country to India, may be of some interest to my readers, I have ventured to add a chapter on the subject.

I was at the Legation in Tehran from November 1896 to April 1898. There were practically no roads in those days. After crossing the Caspian it was necessary to ride a hundred miles to Kazvin on post-horses on rocky mountain roads over the Elburz range, changing horses every twenty miles. The remaining journey of one hundred miles to Tehran across the desert plain was completed in very old and ramshackle open carriages, with four ponies harnessed abreast, most of the harness being tied up with string. In one of my journeys along this road the bottom of the carriage fell out, but that was regarded as quite an ordinary incident, and the bottom was replaced with the aid of a few nails. Tehran was, however, a delightful post, in spite of its isolation



from the civilised world, with a perfect climate, interesting work, and never-ending amusement over the childishness and cheerful character of the Persians, both high and low.

Six months before my arrival Mouzaffer-ed-Din had succeeded his father Nasr-ed-Din as Shah of Persia, and the funeral ceremonies had been concluded only three days before I reached Tehran. My colleagues who had been present said that it was not only the catafalque that was high.

Many forms of sport were to be found at Tehran. Owing to the cheapness of horseflesh polo was a popular game, which the Persians understood and in which they took the greatest interest, though they did not play. I kept three polo ponies and two nice riding hacks, and I paid only fifty pounds for them. These were ordinary prices. There was greyhound coursing, woodcock and duck-shooting at certain seasons of the year, and splendid ibex and moufflon shooting and trout fishing in the Elburz Mountains. All the shooting in the hills round Tehran was strictly preserved by the Shah and game was very abundant. It was not long before I had succeeded in making friends with the Shah, who most kindly gave me a permit to shoot in his preserves.

It was the only one he ever gave. It was couched in terms of which the following is a translation.

“ Mir Shikar ” (Head Keeper)

“ Mr. Hardinge, H.M.’s Chargé d’Affaires, with two or three servants, whenever he wants to shoot in the direction of Kand, send a man with him, that he should go and shoot. The men in charge of the preserves are not to prevent him.”

(Shah’s signature.)

I availed myself of this privilege two or three times but with moderate success, there being, however, one occasion upon which I look back with mixed feelings of satisfaction and regret.

My camp was pitched in a valley near Kand. At six in the morning I came out of my tent and scanned the hills with my glasses in search of game. On a patch of snow on the top of a distant hill I noticed two black spots which, however, did not move. I pointed them out to my shikari, who said at once that they were two ibexes lying in the snow. After studying the wind and the lay of the ground we came to the conclusion that it would be necessary to make a long *détour* and to approach the ibexes from the back of the crest near which they were lying. We

calculated that it would take at least four hours of stiff climbing, with the possibility that by the time we reached our objective the ibexes would be no longer there. Before seven o'clock we were on the move, and I have a vivid recollection of what a steep and difficult climb it was. At one spot we came to a ledge about two feet wide and five yards long on a wall of rock with a deep fall on the other side. My shikari went over it like a goat. When I saw this ledge I said to him, "I cannot do this, is there not another way?" He said "No"; and when I continued to hesitate he sat down on the other side and began to laugh saying, "The Sahib is afraid." This decided me, and hoping for the best I ran along the ledge and on the other side landed my shikari with a good kick on the pants, saying, "That is to teach you never to say that an English Sahib is afraid." He took it quite well and asked my pardon.

After five hours' climbing we reached the crest of the hill, which was covered with deep snow, and crawling very quietly to the top we peeped over and, to our joy, saw the two ibexes still lying in the snow about three hundred yards immediately below us. I then laid myself flat on my stomach with my rifle in front of me and tobogganed down to a little crest of snow about two

feet high and, looking over it, saw that the ibexes had not been disturbed. I was then about a hundred and fifty yards distant from them. Sitting in the snow they did not present a good mark, but taking a steady aim I shot one dead. The second ibex immediately jumped up and stood still for a few seconds, presenting a full broadside to me. I fired and, to my disgust, missed it clean. I have seldom been so disappointed as its head was quite as good as that of the ibex I had shot, both being good, and to get a right and left of ibex after a five hours' stalk would have been something worth remembering.

The weather being hot at Gulahek, the summer residence of the Legation, and some of the Staff having been ill, we decided in July 1897 to move the whole Legation into camp in the Lar valley, about fifty miles from Tehran, keeping in touch with Tehran by daily mounted messengers. Our camp of about twenty tents was pitched on a plateau in a lovely grass valley, surrounded by mountains, with a beautiful trout stream running through it. Behind the plateau was a very high rocky bluff, and in the distance on our front we looked over the valley to Demirvend, the big mountain of the Elburz range, which is always covered with snow. I well remember coming

out of the dining-tent on our first evening at Lar and looking up towards the top of the bluff, which was lit up by the moon behind it, and seeing two ibexes looking down, probably with astonishment at our camp. It was not many days later that we were after them.

As we had work to do during the day it was decided after consultation with the shikaris that the best course would be to leave camp at about midnight and to climb to the tops of the hills before daybreak, and to catch the ibexes on their way up from watering in the plain. During our stay at Lar we did this about twice a week. It was hard work climbing up the rocky mountain sides in the dark, but it was very interesting to note the false dawn which occurred generally about 2.30 a.m. before becoming pitch dark again, to be followed about two hours later by the real dawn and the sunrise, by which time we were generally on the crests of the hills, guarding various tracks by which the ibexes were known to pass on their way to the tops from the plain. We shot a good many ibexes in this way during those weeks, but unfortunately they generally fell several hundred feet, so that very few good heads were obtained. It was, however, very good and exciting sport, and we were nearly always back

in camp by 8 a.m. and ready for the day's work, but rather weary and sleepy!

In Northern Persia, on the snowline in the Elburz range, a magnificent bird, the royal partridge, was to be found. Though the peasants often brought in dead ones for sale, I have never seen one alive, but they appeared to be exactly like the ordinary English partridge, but of the size of a blackcock. The young ones were excellent for cooking purposes.

On one occasion I was invited by a Persian Minister to take part in a drive of ibex and moufflon from the higher ground into the valleys. Large numbers of does passed the rifles, at which a brisk fusillade was kept up by the Persians without much result. But what impressed this expedition on my memory was the Persian luncheon in the open in which I had to take part. The food was excellent, poached eggs and roast lamb cooked on the spot. There were no plates nor knives and forks, and until I had seen my hosts do it I was much perturbed how to eat a poached egg with my fingers, but with skill it can be done without breaking the surface of the egg. As the honoured guest my hosts tore off pieces of lamb with their fingers and handed them to me, but happily I had noticed that they had all

washed their hands before sitting down to the meal. It was an interesting experience.

A further relaxation at Lar was the trout fishing in the Lar River. The trout were certainly the most unsophisticated that I have ever seen. There was a little blood-red fly that they could not resist and they fell easy victims. We always had a plentiful supply of trout, up to three-quarters of a pound in weight, and a natural refrigerator to keep them fresh in a pocket of snow quite close to our camp. Before leaving Lar we decided that we should all fish for one whole day to see how many we could catch. We had seven rods out that day and we caught over five hundred trout, which we sent down and distributed in Tehran. Those were very happy days.

Greyhound coursing round Tehran was very good sport. At the Legation we kept a few Persian greyhounds (seloukis) which have since become a fashionable breed in England. One of my colleagues, Mr. Wyndham (now Sir Percy Wyndham) had a little black dachshund that played quite an important part in our coursing, as will be seen.

Three or four of us would ride out to the plain, leading the hounds in leash, and would then walk in line covering a broad base until a hare was

found. As a rule it did not take long to find a hare. The hounds would then be slipped from their leashes, the dachshund placed on the ground, and we would gallop after the hounds over the stony plain as fast as our horses would carry us. As a rule we knew the different points for which the hare would make, since, quite unlike other hares that I have ever seen or read of, Persian hares run to ground. Their burrows were simply tunnels about twelve to twenty feet in length, and, I believe, constructed by the hares as protection from the numerous birds of prey to be seen in Persia. If the hare succeeded in outstripping the hounds and reaching one of these earths, we used to wait patiently until we heard yapping in the distance and could see a black spot approaching as fast as its short legs made possible. After removing the hounds to a short distance, the dachshund would dash into the hole and drive the hare out at the other end, when the hounds would start again in hot pursuit. The water supply round Tehran is brought into the town from the mountains in underground channels which have air-holes at certain distances, and on more than one occasion I have seen a hare, when hard pressed by the hounds, jump down an air-hole, which could hardly improve the water



supply, but it tends to show the readiness of a Persian hare to go to ground. This coursing was a very interesting and unique experience. Our greyhounds were often injured by porcupines shooting their quills into them when attacked, but the injuries were never really serious, though they might well have been.

As for small game shooting round Tehran, I did very little and with very small success, but I had one interesting experience in that, hearing something scratching in the dry leaves while I was writing in my study, I seized a gun and shot a woodcock from the window of my house in the Legation compound. The Legation compound, which was extensive and full of trees and running water, was a favourite place for flighting woodcock to land temporarily.

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